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BOSTON UNIVERSITY
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Thesis

AN ARGUMENT FOR MONOGAMY AS A SOCIAL IDEAL

Submitted by
Roy Edward Coombs
(S.B. Penn State, 1917)

In partial fulfillment of requirements for
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AN ARGUMENT FOR MONOGAMY AS A SOCIAL IDEAL



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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

The subject of marriage in its essential meanings is of universal and everlasting interest. That proposition may look like a truism, but marriage in its final sense as the great social institution is of large importance today. In its true biological sense, however, marriage is no merely human institution; it is the substance of the process by which all the chief forms of life have persisted on the earth. Millions of years before Man appeared, supposing that self-consciousness ever arose, it is marriage that would have been a leading topic of mediation or of dispute. Still today the question that most affects our well-being, or even continuance on the earth as individuals, as families, as nations or as a species - the questions of heredity, eugenics, sex education, birth control, sterilization, divorce, the place of woman and the care of the child - they are all merely aspects of the central problem of marriage. What then is the best form of marriage?

Into the making of a proper account of marriage there enters biology, physiology, embryology, psychology, ethnography, folk-love, the study of magic and religion, economics and law. Any book, thesis or paper on marriage has at the outset a genuine interest appeal on the part of all who feel the smallest concern in themselves or their fellows.

Marriage is generally used as a term for a social institution. As such it may be defined as a relation of one or more men to one or more women which is recognized by custom or law, and involves certain rights and duties both in the case of the parties entering the union and in the case of the children born of it. These rights and duties vary among different peoples and cannot, therefore, all be included in a general definition; but

there must, of course, be something which they have in common. Marriage always implies the right of sexual intercourse; society holds such intercourse allowable in the case of husband and wife, and generally speaking even regards it as their duty to gratify in some measure the other partners desire. Legally this right to sexual intercourse is exclusive. However, a large influential group of persons feel there is no moral evil outside of the marriage tie, and confusion is growing on this point in present day society.

At the same time marriage is something more than a sexual relation. It is an economic institution which may in various ways effect the proprietary rights of the parties. It is the husband's duty, so far as it is possible and necessary to support his wife and children, but it may also be their duty to work for him. As a general rule he has some power over them, although his power over the children is generally of limited duration. Very often marriage determines the place which a newly born individual is to take in the social structure of the community to which he or she belongs; but this cannot, as has been maintained, be regarded as the chief and primary function of marriage, considering how frequently illegitimate children are treated exactly like legitimate ones with regard to descent, inheritance and succession. It is finally necessary that the union to be recognized as a marriage should be concluded in accordance with the rules laid down by custom or law, whatever these rules may be. They may require the consent of the parties themselves or of their parents or of the parties as well as of their parents. They may compel the man to pay a price for his bride, or the parents of the latter to provide her with a dowry. They may prescribe the performance of a particular marriage ceremony of one kind or other. Further no man and woman are regarded as husband and wife unless the conditions stipulated by

custom or law are complied with.

These customs or laws have varied at times among all peoples, promiscuity, polyandry, polygyny, group marriage, loose unions and monogamy have been tried. As this problem of the relationship between man and woman has beaten every civilization yet developed and all the known forms of marriage or union appear to have been tried, where is mankind to look for a solution today? Many recognize in the ideal of monogamy the goal towards which education, habit and social custom should aim; others maintain that man is naturally promiscuous and monogamy is at variance with evolutionary development. Although in Europe and America monogamy strictly interpreted as one legal wife, is either the law or the practice, it is only among the poor and the more ethically developed individuals in any race or country that biological monogamy without prostitution or promiscuity obtains.

Marriage is going through a difficult period. Not only has it to take the step in its evolution from wife purchase to equal partnership, but the higher ideal of the standard of happiness required in marriage due to the greater intellectuality and emotional development of the individuals concerned, coupled with the growth of eugenic responsibility and the modern tendency to question the utility of all social customs. This great change puts monogamy on its trial. However, though struggling to exist amidst almost impossible conditions at the present time, it remains the ideal.

The customs or laws effecting marriage today are being modified at a rate which seriously challenges thought. The most outstanding change which has dominated the field for a half century but more especially during the last decade has been the spread of facilities for divorce. In 1890 there were more than 16 marriages for each divorce; in 1924 there were less than seven marriages per divorce; in 1925 there were 6.7 marriages per divorce.¹

¹ Goodsell W. Problems of the Family pp 374

¹

In Oregon in 1924 the ratio was one divorce to every 2.3 marriages.

In one of our American cities last year there were slightly more divorces granted than there were marriages consummated, and the increase appears to be gathering speed. We have examples of movie actors and actresses having as many as 4 wives or 4 husbands in three years. One actress a few weeks ago married her second husband and in four days divorced him. The question arises, have we a monogamic form of marriage or has it become a tandem polygyny, polyandry or legalized prostitution of a refined nature?

Judge Lindsay is calling the attention of the country to the fact that our present arrangement in marriage is not real, and offering a new form which he believes will stabilize our monogamic form.²

There are some who believe it is foolish in the light of our tremendous advance in science to try to maintain monogamy. The great war further tended to complicate matters by killing off 10,000,000 men, thus breaking the biological ratio and creating situations like that in Birmingham, England where there are five women to one man, and on the continent of Europe where there are three women to one man. Dr. G. LeBon (La civilization des Arabes) thinks that European laws will in the future legalize polygamy, and Professor V. Ehrenfels even regards the adoption of polygamy as necessary for the preservation of the Aryan race.³

With present practice tending to discount the present form of marriage and some sociologists agitating for looser union or polygamy, I have endeavored to discover for myself under what form of marriage man and woman can achieve their highest development and society its richest culture. This form I have concluded is an absolute monogamy. By such I mean a union entered into by one man and one woman for a life long relationship.

¹ Goodsell, op. cit. pp 375

² Lindsay B. B. & Evans W, Companionate Marriage pp V - VIII

³ Westermarck Edward, The History of Human Marriage Vol.III pp 105

CHAPTER I

The Various Forms of Marriage Other Than Monogamy

1. Polygyny

By way of providing a background it is well for us to briefly sketch the most common forms of marriage which society has developed in the life time of the race giving possible causes, extent of the practice and the possible contribution they might make today.

The first is Polygyny. Polygyny is the form of marriage in which one man takes to himself more than one wife. The number usually extends on the average to three or four, however, we have classic examples like that of King Mtessa of Uganda who is said to have had 7,000 wives and the same is the case with the King of Loango.¹ This may offer a solution to the pernicious American problem of divorce.

It is in Africa that we find polygyny at its height, both in the point of frequency and so far as the number of wives is concerned. The above examples are African kings. It is found in China and was practised by different tribes of the North and South American Indians.

The general rule in this form of marriage is undoubtedly that one of the wives holds a higher social position than the rest or is regarded as the principal wife; and in the large majority of these cases it is the first married wife to whom such a distinction is assigned. In exceptional cases only, we hear that the higher position of one of the wives depends not on priority of marriage but on superiority of rank, or that the principal wife is the mother of the first born.

The head wife may or may not have more privileges than that of being

¹ Westermarck Vol. III pp 21

mistress of the house and entrusted with the keeping of the house in order. On the other hand her authority over the other wives may be so great that they are practically her hand-maids. She is often consulted by the husband when he wishes to take a second wife and her veto may be decisive.

In considering polygyny certain questions quickly arise in one's mind. Why are some people polygynous and others monogamous, and why is the number of wives larger in some polygynous marriages than among those of other polygynous people? These questions cannot be answered in every detail, but it is easy to show that there are certain circumstances that have a tendency to produce polygyny and others that make for monogamy. One factor which has undoubtedly exercised much influence upon the form of marriage is the numerical proportion between the sexes.

Among the Indian tribes of North America who were at war with each other so much that often there were more women than men. It was politic to change the social custom from monogamy to polygyny.

Another cause is the importation of women from other peoples, as prisoners of war. In some parts of the globe more females are born than males. This is true in Baganda, among the Bangoro (northwest of Uganda) the Mangbetter country and among the Konde people in "German East Africa."¹ The difference in the biological ration among the early Mormons when they settled Utah is the reason now given for their polygyny. The reason was quickly given the support of religious sanction, and was most productive in increasing their population and in helping them to exploit the riches of their new country.

While the existence of available women facilitates polygyny or makes it possible, the direct cause of it is generally the men's desire to

¹ Westermarck op. cit. pp 61

have more than one wife. There are various reasons for this, some of which are used by men today to justify a liaison, a mistress or love maiden. They run as follows:-

First, monogamy requires of a man a periodical continence from his wife every month. At the lower stages of civilization a woman during the period was an object of superstitious fear. Second, among many peoples the husband had also to abstain from his wife during pregnancy, or at least the latter stages of it. In a still higher degree than the obligatory abstinence from conjugal intercourse during pregnancy does the necessity to refrain from such intercourse after childbirth lead to polygynous practices. Sometimes the period of abstinence extended for a certain number of months; in other cases it continued for two years.

One of the chief arguments for polygyny is the attraction which the female youth and beauty exercise upon the men. A fresh wife is taken when the first grows old. A further reason is man's taste for variety. The sexual instinct is dulled by long familiarity and stimulated by novelty. It is not, however, from sexual motive alone that a man may wish to have more than one wife. He may do so also because he is desirous of offspring, where such will advance his wealth and authority. The barrenness of a wife, or the birth of a female offspring only is a very common reason for the choice of another partner in addition to the former one. It is practised not only as a means of obtaining offspring but of obtaining numerous progeny. Many wives contributed to a man's wealth and material comfort. They also increase his social importance, reputation and authority apart from the influence of the number of his children.

Last of all among the reasons we could name for polygyny, but by no means the least, is the levirate which is the custom of a man marrying

his brother's widow. A man because of this may be forced into polygyny even though he is satisfied with his one wife. This is a place where law and custom and not the will or desire of the individual effects the marriage form.

The arguments for polygyny appear impressive, especially in those countries and among those peoples who have supported it by their laws and customs, making it moral. However, polygyny has decreased with the growth of modern civilization. For this reason alone we are forced to discount it as the ideal of marriage. It does not stand the test of the severe trials in the onward upward march of society. This is shown by the recent ban on polygyny established by the last most outstanding polygynous nation; namely Turkey. The new republic has now substituted monogamy for the harem.¹ This sunset of polygyny in the last great eastern nation and the arguments for a form of polygyny by the wealthier and more powerful nations of the west, do forecast the downfall of these nations as others in the past have done unless they can purify the institution which was an important condition in their greatness; namely monogamy.

2. Polyandry

The second form we would mention is Polyandry. Polyandry is a much rarer form of marriage than polygyny. It is the form where one woman will have two or more husbands. Sometimes a family of brothers will marry one woman, in which case the eldest brother is the recognized head of the family. This is true of the Maquiritares. Cases of polyandry have been noticed in the Americas. Among the Avances and Maypures, along the Orinoco Humboldt found that brothers often had but one wife. Cases have been found among the Zaparo Indians of Ecuador, Paraguay, Aleutian Islands and parts

¹ Neville - Rolfe, Eugenics Review, July 1925 pp 90

of China.¹

In Tibet polyandry has prevailed from time immemorial, and it is still very common there although not so common as in earlier days. In the most cases the marriages are brothers marrying one woman. In Eastern Tibet each husband lives with the wife for a month or more at a time, and signifies the fact that he is in possession by hanging his boots up outside the door.

The sons born of these marriages are called the sons of the eldest brother, husband and the nephews of the other ones.

It appears from Westermarck's account that it is only in a few areas that polyandry is, or has been practised by a considerable number of the population whilst among various peoples it has been restricted to more or less exceptional cases. In a single instance that of the Massagetae of Turkistan, it is represented as the only recognized form of marriage, but this statement made by an old Chinese writer with reference to a foreign people must be looked upon with suspicion.² Very frequently polyandry, like polygyny is modified in a monogamous direction as one, usually the first married wife in polygynous families, is the chief wife, so one, usually the first husband in polyandrous families, is often or mostly the chief husband. Any other man with whom he shares his wife is in various cases spoken of as a secondary husband, or as a deputy or assistant who acts as husband and master of the house during the absence of the true lord, but on the latter's return becomes his servant, or merely as a recognized paramour a "half-partner" a "brother-in-love" or a connubial "companion."

One of the causes given for polyandry is the numerical proportion

¹ Westermarck op. cit. pp 107

² Westermarck op. cit. pp 110

between the sexes. Among various polyandrous peoples there are said to be more men than women, and their polyandry has been directly due to it. Other causes of debatable basis are given, and because of the question surrounding them we will not treat them here. The chief cause which is ascribed is the biological factor.

"According to Prejevalski, among the Mongols the women are far less numerous than the men, and Yanorski says that among the Turcomans there are 100 boys born to 76 girls."¹

It would be interesting to pause at this point and discover the normal birth rate and for this we are indebted to Popenoe, "It is, a matter of chance, whether a boy or girl is produced from a given mating; and, as one would expect ----- and knows actually to be the case, the number of boys and girls born is just about equal." "Just about equal," - but not quite, for the actual sex ratio in live births is about 105 boys to 100 girls, all over the world.²

In a census of the North West Provinces of India in 1866 the proportions were found to be 100 men to 86 women, and in the Punjab 100 men to 81.8 women. Mr. Dunlop, another authority says, 'It is

¹ Neville - Rolfe, Sybil. Modern Marriage and Monogamy - The Eugenics Review July 1925 pp 89

² Popenoe, Paul - The Problems of Human Reproduction pp 76

remarkable that wherever the practice of polyandry exists, there is a striking disproportion among the sexes of the children as well as the adults. In a village I have found upwards of 400 boys where there were only 120 girls." The reason for this is still in doubt. It used to be maintained that privation and mal-nutrition of the mother tended to result in a preponderance of boys being born, but Punnett and others hold that the hypothesis has not been proved. It may be that there is an inherent tendency in certain races, a mutation, that leads to the discrepancy between the sexes which gave rise in the first place to the custom of polyandry. There seems hardly any evidence of polyandry existing among a prosperous agricultural people. At the present time it is practised mainly in Central Asia, though as I have mentioned earlier we find traces of it elsewhere.¹

Briffault takes issue with Westermarck and those who maintain that the chief immediate cause of polyandry is a numerical disproportion between the sexes. He writes, "There is in Tibet no trace of evidence to give color to the supposition." Signor Puini, summing up very cautiously the information on the subject remarks: "As regards the scarcity of women, it appears to me in respect to Tibet to be rather a motive imagined in order to explain the practice of polyandry than a fact corresponding to reality. The large number of those who give themselves up to monastic life and consequently to celibacy removes any excess of males which might be found among the Tibetan race. The women who embrace a religious life are in far lesser number and are chiefly those who have been unable to find a place in families. So one may in truth estimate the numbers of the males are approximately equal to those of the females."² Mr. Rockhill in "The Land of the

¹ Neville - Rolfe op. cit. pp 89

² Briffault Vol I - page 667

"Lamas" is of the opinion that the numbers of women and men are probably equal.¹ Sir Herbert Risley never heard polyandry assigned to a scarcity of women, and believes the sexes in Sikkim and Tibet are fairly equal. These estimates, however, appear to be moderate.² In Lahul where polyandry is extensively practised, both the census of 1881 and that of 1891 show that the women outnumber the men in the large proportion of 108 to 100.³

The survival of polyandrous institutions in Tibet, is not because they are particularly Tibetan, according to Briffault, but because Tibet has remained peculiarly isolated. The same institutions are found at the present day throughout the Himalayan region, but in varying stages of decay and obsolescence.⁴

One hypotheses offered in explanation of polyandry is the suggestion that the people who practice it suffer from some abnormal mental conformation. This hypothesis is based on opinion and lacks the scientific data which might make it tenable. Most authorities hold that it is a perversion of a primitive monogamy and upon contact with the progressive march of man it will quickly disappear.

3. Group Marriage

The third form is Group Marriage. Group Marriage is the form whereby a family of brothers will marry a family of sisters, although it need not always be a group of brothers nor a group of sisters that enter the relationship. A group of closely allied males may share in common several wives. This form is found among many peoples who practice

¹ Rockhill W. W. "The Land of the Lamas" page 212

² Risley H. H. "People of India" pp 212

³ Westermarck Vol. III pp 163

⁴ Briffault Robert, The Mothers Vol. I. pp 676 -678

Polyandry, especially in Sikkim, Tibet, Blentan and the Kanels of the higher hills of Punjab.

There can be no doubt in these cases group marriage has arisen as a combination of polygyny with polyandry. "We are told that the Todas, the Sinhalese and the Himalayans or their ancestors - like every other people - originally practised group marriage, and that polyandry arose among them when they fell into the habit of killing off so many female infants that only one was left in each family; the sons in one family who had formerly married all the daughters of another family had thenceforth to be content with a single wife between them."¹ This explanation of the transition from group marriage to polyandry is questioned by many students of the subject, and it is possible that the whole truth cannot be so simply stated as has been done by Bernloft and Kohler.

Mr. Savage Landor "In the Forbidden Land" gives a definite statement in regard to the organization of group marriage. 'A Tibetan girl on marrying does not enter into a nuptial tie with an individual, but with all his family in the following somewhat complicated manner.' If an eldest son marries an eldest sister all the sisters of the bride become his wives. Should he, however, begin by marrying the second sister, then only the sisters from the second down will be his property. If the third, all from the third and so on. At the same time when the bridegroom has brothers they are all regarded as their brother's wife's husbands, and they one and all cohabit with her as well as with her sisters if she has any. This latter phase is a complete group marriage in principle as well as

1

Block Iwan. "The Secual Life in Our Time"
Page 193 - Trans. London 1908

practice, all the males of one group becoming united by virtue of the marriage contract to all the females of another and reciprocally."¹

In such group-marriage between two families it is evident that every possibility may occur. Thus one writer describes how in the district of Kunamar 'in one house there may be three brothers with one wife; in the next house there may be three brothers with four wives, all alike in common - in the next house there may be a man with three wives to himself, in the next a man with only one wife.'²

The rule of seniority according to Mr. Landor "In Forbidden Land" renders the arrangement of group marriage complicated. When the elder brother marries, none of the younger brothers are allowed to marry during his elder brother's lifetime unless he severs completely his connection with the family and leaves the household. Similarly the younger sisters when the elder sister marries, are debarred from contracting any further alliance. If, as not infrequently happens the husband has no brothers or they are unable or unwilling to support a number of wives, the younger sisters are condemned to celibacy so long as their older sister lives; the usual course for them is to retire to a convent and the female lamaseries of Tibet are peopled with younger sisters who can neither be supported as wives by the husbands of their older sister nor contract any independent marriage on their own account. These lamaseries are also the retreat of younger brothers who cannot marry while the older brother is living.²

¹

Landor, Henry Savage, In The Forbidden Land
Vol. II pp 62

²

" " " " " " " " pp 63-65

It is well nigh impossible to establish any reason for Group Marriage. Just as some authorities have endeavored to prove that polygyny arose from Group Marriage so some others would maintain that the two customs of the sororate and the liverate are traceable to the same source; namely Group Marriage. Some have said that it is the residuary legatee of the old promiscuity, or it is the earliest form of marriage out of which the others have gradually developed.

With the knowledge we possess of many of the lowest races now existing and the relationship in the animal kingdom these possible explanations must be questioned. For the purpose of this paper we must be satisfied to mention its existence and discount its having any place compared with monogamy in the present or future social order.

CHAPTER II

Monogamy is the Most Common and Enduring Form of the Family

1. The Animal Kingdom and Primitive Life

We now turn our attention to monogamy. What are the circumstances which have aided it and the reasons for its establishment? It is by far the most common form and if we read history and human nature correctly, it is the form which obtains in the highest and best culture.

Real love centers around one woman and one man. This is not confined to the human race, for no excessive education is needed to learn that monogamy among many of the higher carnivora and birds is as natural a form of sex union as the polygyny of the grass eaters or the promiscuity among insects, reptiles and fish. Monogamy appears in the natural order of life when it is to the advantage of the young to have the continued care of both parents. This means that the parents share in the activities of supporting the family. Because of the united activities and mutual services of the pair love is developed and stays. Such profound affection is found in some of these natural marriages 'that if one of a pair is killed the other will not mate again.'

Darwin found that in domesticated mammals the love bird rarely survives the death of its companion, even if supplied with a fresh and suitable mate.

According to Brehm and other authorities, most birds pair

for life, except the Gallinaceans; and Mouzkouski from his observations of the apes in Sumatra, tells us they usually live in families consisting of father, mother and one or two young. The fact that the family remains as a unit until the younger offspring are sufficiently grown to lead an independent existence, shows that monogamy over the child bearing period exists among some at least of the anthropoid apes.¹

"It is a fact well known to naturalists that the male gorilla, the chimpanzee and the orang-utan remain with the female and their common offspring until they are able to shift for themselves. The male not only protects his mate and their young, but he procures food for them during their period of helplessness."²

As far as we can tell from the early history of man he did not first live in herds but eked out a precarious existence as a hunter. Even to this day the primitive hunting races are those practising monogamy - first because one wife and her offspring is as much as one man can protect and maintain in food, and second, because those races that have been bred in monogamy are probably

¹ Neville - Rolfe - op. cit. pp 88

² Goodsell W, op. cit. pp 4

of the type suited by biological selection to the practice.

S. N. Rolfe in the Eugenics Review argues the point further as follows:

"Monogamy for man is the natural biological law uncomplicated by the artificial conditions provided by civilization."¹

"When man had to seek his own food unaided by mechanical contrivances, he had to select a fit mate and remain her protector if the race was to continue. The sparsity of population, the scarcity of food, the smallness of human groups hardly ever exceeding more than a dozen families in number, the helplessness of the women and children, all together conspired to make impractical any other form of sex relation than that of a simple pairing monogamy. Male jealousy and biological conditions also worked in favor of this arrangement. At the present time, among many primitive peoples strict monogamy is also the rule, e.g., the hunting tribes of the South American Indians, the aborigines of the Malay Peninsula, the Andaman Islanders, the Veddahs of Ceylon, the Negritos of the Phillipine Islands and even some of the Central African Pygmies. In many of these tribes the code is far stricter than in any civilized country, in some cases adultery being punished by immediate death for both parties."²

"It is among many of these peoples too, that the test for fitness for marriage is most insisted upon. It is well known that the Indian warrior had to prove his fitness to found a family and

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Neville - Rolfe Sybil, Eugenics Review - July 1925 pp. 91

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" " " " " " " " pp 91

protect a wife by bringing back so many scalps."

"In some of the African tribes a rhinoceros has to be killed by a bachelor as a proof of eligibility for marriage, and among the Andaman islanders we have a good example of the equal responsibility of the sexes."¹

In mankind the absorbing passion for one is found not only among the civilized but also among savage men and women. "Among the Indians of Western Washington and North Western Oregon, instances are not rare of young women destroying themselves on the death of a lover."² Suicide from unsuccessful or disappointed love is by no means infrequent in the savage world, and although apparently more common among women it also occurs in the case of men. In Tahiti unsuccessful suitors have been known to take their own lives in despair. In Pentecost of the New Hebrides, unrequited love has led to suicide or to rapid pining away to death. "In Fiji Sir Basil Thomson has met with several cases of what is called 'udongai' which corresponds with what is called 'broken heart' in Europeans." Two young people who have come together once or twice and who have been suddenly separated sicken and pine away, and unless their intrigue can be resumed they do not recover. "On the Gold Coast, according to Cruickshank, love is frequently distinguished by an order and a constancy full of distracting fears and doubts, and seeks its gratification regardless of the greatest sacrifices. The African rushes into battle, shouting the name of his lady-love to inspire him to deeds of daring; the canoeman gives additional vigor to the stroke of his paddle at the mention of her name; the weary hammock bearer plucks up a new spirit through the same all powerful spell, and the solitary wayfarer beguiles the tediousness of his journey by a song in her praise."³ Davis

¹ Neville - Rolfe, op. cit. pp 91

² Gibbs George, Tribes of Western Washington and N. W. Oregon pp198

³ Westermarck Vol. III pp 103

tells us of a negro who after vain attempts to redeem his sweetheart from slavery became a slave himself rather than be separated from her. Curr speaks in his recollections of squatting in Victoria of a native youth who had lost his heart to a girl and says that this set him thinking of how little real difference there is in the feelings of men.¹

It is a most reassuring fact in social evolution that monogamy, naturally belonging to our species has persisted among the common people and in popular ideals even in "The Arabian Nights" the love story is always about one man and one woman, never the mad passion for the harem.

The upward struggle of the race has been and is toward monogamy. Monogamy is the only form of marriage that is permitted among every people. Wherever we find polygyny, polyandry or group marriage , we find monogamy side by side with it. On the other hand, it is also in many cases the only form of marriage which is permitted by custom or law. This may be due to the mere force of habit or possibly to the notion that some men must not appropriate a plurality of wives when others in consequence get none at all; or to a feeling that polygyny is an offense against the female sex; or to the condemnation of lust. Whichever if any of these explanations are applicable the fact remains men have moved in the direction of monogamy.

Primitive polygyny where marriage is usually a form of wife purchase (one wife equaling three cows, or so many sacks of maize) often gives evidence of being in origin a monogamous custom where the first wife is "principal wife" and the others are in a different social class the same marriage ceremonies may be carried out in each case, and each subsequent wife may be duly purchased and the man will assume responsibility for her future for life, but is approximating

¹ Westermarck op. cit. pp 103

the marriage with concubinage and shows traces in recognizing the one principal wife or the earlier days when monogamy was the custom of the tribe and the struggle for existence more intense.

2. Elements of Monogamy in Higher Cultures Where Polygyny is Practised.

a. Hebrews

This holding on to monogamy as the ideal is shown to a marked degree throughout the Old Testament narratives, even though the custom of the Hebrews and the law in all its codes definitely sanctioned polygyny. There was no limit set to the number of wives that a man might acquire by the regular procedure of purchase in marriage, or by purchase of slaves or by capture in war. There was a distinction between the regular married wives and those of subordinate rank, who were generally slaves. No reproach attached to a man, however, for the possession of concubines nor to the women themselves, who occupied a recognized position in the patriarchal household. The children of such unions were legitimate and might share in the inheritance with the children of wedded wives.

The tendency toward monogamy, however, is shown in that the original privilege of a man to acquire as many wives as he pleased and to treat them as his property was definitely modified in the various legislative codes. The slave girl who became one of the lesser wives of her master could not be sold thereafter. She might be redeemed by her kinsfolk. If she had been espoused to the son of her master she was to be treated as one of his own daughters.¹ In the Deuteronomic Code the same privilege was accorded the maiden captured in war who became one of the lesser wives of her captor.² She could not there-

¹ Exodus 21: 7-9

² Deuteronomy 20: 14/21:10 ff

after be sold as a common slave. Moreover, the rude passions of war were mitigated by the provision that the woman should be allowed a month after being torn from her own people before her master could espouse her. A further provision for the slave wives was that they could not even be neglected. If the master took an additional slave wife, he must either continue the first in the position and privileges of wife-hood or allow her to go free; she could not be sold.¹

Naturally, polygyny was too expensive to be common among the people generally, and the relative equality in the number of sexes would make it impossible. The slaughter of the men and capture of the women in warfare doubtless provided a large number of female slaves. Among the middle class bigamy was probably the most usual form of the practice, and that would often result from a man's dissatisfaction with his first wife. Thus the two wives the one loved and the other hated, must often have caused domestic tragedy in Israel. As memorable examples we have Leah and Rachel,² Hannah and Peninnah.³ In all polygynous households the different mothers plot and scheme for their own children and the inheritance is often secured by the favorite for her sons, but the Deuteronomistic law made special provision that where there were two wives, the one loved and the other hated, the law of primogeniture should rigorously obtain.⁴.

Further the effort to keep monogamy before the people as the ideal is shown by the early writers, first in the creation story, for there we have one husband and wife in Adam and Eve.⁵ The effort is also shown in the stories of Noah, Isaac, Joseph, Moses, the high priest⁶ Job., and so far as we know of the prophets.

¹ Exodus 21:10 f

⁴ Deuteronomy 21: 15-17

² Genesis 29:30

⁵ Genesis 2: 18-25

³ I Samuel 1: 1-16

⁶ Leviticus 21:14

Monogamy as the ideal is seen also in the apology for Abraham taking a second wife on account of the childlessness of Sarah.¹ and of Jacob on account of the deception of Laban,² also in the disapproval of the harem of the king.³ A particularly offensive form of polygyny, the marriage of two sisters as in the case of Jacob, was forbidden in the latter law.⁴

b. Christians.

Polygyny was not absolutely forbidden in the Christian Church, but was incompatible with the spirit of Christianity. It was one of the stubborn problems with which the early church had to deal. Even in the time of Philip of Hesse and Frederick William II of Prussia they contracted bigamous marriages with the sanction of the Lutheran clergy. Luther himself approved of the bigamy of the former.⁵ On various occasions Luther speaks of polygyny with considerable toleration. Polygyny was held as being preferable to divorce. In 1650, soon after the Peace Westphalia, when the population had been greatly reduced by the Thirty Years War, the Frankish Kreistag at Nuremberg passed the resolution that henceforth every man should be allowed to marry two women.⁶ Certain Christian sects have been advocated, polygyny with much fervour. In 1531 the Anabaptists openly preached at Munster that he who wants to be a true Christian must have several wives. It was not until the Rabbinical Synod at Worms in the beginning of the 11th century that an expressed prohibition against the practice of polygyny was established.⁷

c. Among Mohammedans

We find true polygyny - the permanent and legal marriage of a

¹ Genesis 16: 2

⁴ Leviticus 18: 18

² Genesis 29: 21-30

⁵ Westermarck op. cit. pp50

³ Deuteronomy 17: 17

⁶ Westermarck op. cit. pp 51

⁷ Neville-Rolfe op. cit. pp 91

man to more than one wife is supposed to be the custom among Moslem peoples. It is allowed by law and religion, but obtains in practice far less than is generally supposed.

According to the Imperial Gazetteer of India, there are among the Hindus and Buddhists 1008 and 1007 wives respectively to every 1000 husbands.

Among the Mohammedans of India there are only 1021 wives to every 1000 husbands, so that even if no man had more than two wives, all but 21 would be monogamous.¹ The Muntazalite doctors taught that the Koran advocated monogamy, and laid emphasis on the fact that the clause in the Koran which allowed four contemporaneous marriages was followed by the admonition: "And if ye fear that ye cannot be equitable, then (marry) only one."² They argue that as it is not humanly possible for a man to be absolutely impartial in his treatment of four wives that monogamy must be considered the law.

In actual practice at the present time, a few of the wealthy Moslems in India, Turkey and elsewhere have several wives, but the majority owing to poverty content themselves with one, while a certain number of the better to do, because they are more educated and choose educated women as wives, limit themselves to one legal wife, though in the latter cases concubinage is by no means rare.

In Turkey as referred to earlier polygyny has recently been made illegal. None of the Hindu laws restrict the number of wives allowed, though the teachings and interpretation given favor monogamy. According to Westermarck:- "Apastamba says; 'if a householder has a

¹ Imperial Gazetteer of India Vol. I pp 483, 482

² Neville-Rolfe op. cit. pp 90

wife who is able and willing to perform her share of the religious duties, and who bears sons, he shall not take a second." ¹

While investigation into the causes of monogamy and polygyny show the race made some progress up to a certain extent under polygyny, nevertheless the higher forms of culture and civilization have come under monogamous marriage as shown next.

¹ Westermarck Vol. III pp 45

CHAPTER III

Monogamy Has Been Important as a Condition of Social Energy

The records of history show a series of different societies in different places, each rising to a civilization as they become predominantly monogamous, achieving high culture when that predominant monogamous state is preserved and falling into decline as it is modified or discarded. In the same manner as societies have advanced from savagery to civilization, and then faded away into a state of general decrepitude, so in each of them has marriage first previously changed from a temporary affair based on mutual consent to a life-long association of one man with one woman, and then turned back to a loose union or to polygyny. The whole of human history does not contain a single instance of a group becoming civilized unless monogamy has been the prevailing form of union, nor is there any example of a group retaining its culture after it has adopted less rigorous customs. Marriage as a life-long association (Monogamy) has been an attendant circumstance of all human achievement and its adoption has preceded all manifestations of social energy, whether that energy be reflected in conquest, in art and science, in the extension of the social vision, or in the substitution of monotheism for polytheism, and the exaltation of the conception of one God.

The historical data given here, it is my purpose to show, is not only coincident with monogamous practices, but intimately

connected by causal relationship. Monogamy must be recognized as a mainspring of social energy, and a necessary condition of human development.

1. Among the Babylonians

Among the Amoritish Semites, in the fourth phase of Babylonian history (2300 - 1950) marriage was originally by purchase. Bride price was paid to the father; wives and children were property and could be sold, mortgaged and repudiated at will. A wife caught in adultery was drowned. For her to refuse conjugal rights was an offense against society punishable by death. By end of Hammurabi's reign customs had completely changed. Jastrow says:-

"The social advance over earlier conditions is considerable. The husband can no longer put away his wife at will. If no blame attaches to her, a fair compensation must be given, not merely half a mina but in the case where there are children also the dowry; or if there are children, then in lieu of the dowry sufficient alimony to bring up her children and a share in the husband's estate after the children have reached their majority.

"The marital power thus appears greatly curbed, corresponding to the restrictions placed upon the exercise of parental authority.

"The old Sumerian family laws give the power of

absolute divorce to the husband, without distinction as to whether there are children or not, whether the woman has done wrong or is entirely innocent. The Hammurabi code not only makes a distinction between the childless wife and the one who has borne children, but permits absolute divorce without compensation only in the case of guilt on the part of the wife."¹

The wife was granted power to break a bond which had become repugnant to her. She could refuse conjugal rights and justify her aversion in the courts. Her own conduct being adjudged innocent, she was allowed to return to her people - a separation for incompatibility.

Finally, the position of woman in the community improved so much that she could now hold property, trade and contract in her own name and bear witness in the courts. She was jointly responsible for debts incurred by her husband, and was on a footing of legal equality.

During the great Sumerian revival in the days of the Kings of Ur (2600 - 2300 B.C.) the same process had already gone on. The original Sumerian family laws were severe, but a part of a Sumerian Code contains some sections which are the same as some of those in the later code, introducing the modifications mentioned above. Especially is there one which deals with adultery. The penalty is no longer drowning, but permission to the man to take another wife. This shows the influence of woman in her constant fight to throw off from herself the full penalty of adultery. In the time of Gudea wives are being mentioned in the contracts as being equally responsible for carrying

¹ Jastrow Morris, Journal of American Oriental Society
Vol. 36 pp 7

out the provisions - this showing considerable economic advancement over previous conditions. We know also that Dungi appointed his daughters rulers of provinces.

The habits of the Sumerian people, who very much modified their monogamy when they fell into decline before the Amorites were afterwards adopted by the conquerors. These same or similar modifications being copied and adopted by the Amorites, they too fell away before the assaults of the rude and uncultivated Kassites.

Nor is this all. In the twenty-eighth century before the time of Akkadian hegemony great conquerors were her rulers, but Urukagina usurped the throne at a time of general decadence when the city was throttled by a huge hierarchy. Open adultery had become rampant. His first reform was to reinforce the old rules of continence and to re-introduce the old severe punishments. His efforts did not prevent the fall of the city, but it is interesting to note that after the Akkadian rule had passed away it is the rulers of Lagash who inaugurate "a new epoch in literature and art, and the new sentiment is found."¹

2. Among the Assyrians

The Assyrians, though subject to Hammurabi, had lagged behind in the matter of social development. After the fall of the Babylonian Empire they were still absolutely monogamous. A childless widow was married to another brother of the husband. A woman had no control over property, and if she pledged or sold her husband's goods she was guilty of theft. It was a punishable offense to contract with her. However, the Avesta shows progress has taken place and that woman attained a high position. The Pishdadian period was a time when "men

¹ Langdon S, The Cambridge Ancient History Vol. 1, pp 433

hunted and tilled, women minded the house and children were enjoined to be reverent to elders, dutiful to parents and diligent workers for the household." "Sexual infidelity was a grave offense, and violation of the sanctity marriage gives Astrivanghuki (female genius of chastity)."¹ By the fifteenth century the Assyrians were being treated by Egypt as the equals of their former masters, but just before Zoroaster polygyny was starting to occur amongst the higher classes. To be childless was the greatest possible calamity which could befall a household. It was doubtless childlessness, or the fear of it, which was the cause of the change. In the seventh century just before the final debacle, polygyny aggravated by the influx of war captives, had become common. A record of a district around Harran shows that out of sixty-four men, nine are wifeless, while sixteen have two wives, six have three and four and five wives are possessed by two men.

3. Among the Persians

The virile Medes, after living a frugal life in the mountains, fell down upon Assyria. Indulgence through polygyny and concubinage sapped their energy, and in four or five generations they gave way to the Persians, who conquered all the peoples which had been subject to the Assyrians and founded the great Persian Empire. But they had no culture of their own, their wives captured in war made them an indulgent people, and by the time they enter history they are polygynous. They were defeated so soon as they came up against an absolutely monogamous people. Alexander did not have to fight very much to gain possession of all their country.

4. Among the Greeks

Of the Achaeans, Homer affords details of the absolute monogamy

¹ Dhalla M. N., Zoroastrian Civilization pp 69-70; 111

and its gradual qualification. They are "out and out monogamists."

Parental and marital authority is complete. The rise in the position of women was very marked.

But concubinage comes to be practised. The children of such unions were bastard, but there are traces that the mark of bastardy was losing its sting and that the tendency was to regard the bastard on the same terms as a legitimate son. It is this tendency to polygyny which is the chief complaint of Thersites - "Soft fools" he calls the Atridae "base things of shame, ye women of Achaea and men no more." Two generations after Agamemnon the great Achaean passes into oblivion. "The general tone of the Iliad and the Odyssey is not a nascent, but a decaying order of things."¹

When culture comes again, in Attica, an area untouched by the Archieans and unaffected by the Dorians, it is with a people who regard marriage as a life long association. The Greeks of Attica were absolutely monogamous. Time brings the same changes as before, and the date of their full institution is the fifth century. By the end of that century, three generations before the Greeks became a subject race, the old customs had completely changed. Isocrates complains (in a way which sounds familiar) referring to Marathon and Salamis, "Then our young men did not waste their days in gambling houses and with music girls."²

The denial of legality to a marriage with an "Outlander" woman, and the popularity to which these women attained, endangered the monogamic tie. The effect was at first refining, but later enervating. For, like the word, "mistress" in English "companion" came to mean not much more than concubine. A generation after Pericles, Demosthenes could say, "We have companions for the sake of pleasure and wives to

¹ Unwin J. D. Monogamy and Social Energy, Hibberd Journal
July 1927 pp 665

² Unwin op. cit. pp 666

bear us legal offspring."¹

Paederasty became a common indulgence - a thing unknown in Homer. Women could not endure the continual seclusion to which they were subjected, and clandestine love affairs were common among them as was drunkenness. In spite of a movement for their emancipation, their economic status was not much improved. Professor Westermarck thus sums it up:-

"Among the Greeks of early days marriage was a union of great stability, although in later times it became extremely easy and frequent."²

In Dorian Sparta there was no such thing as a virtue of life long faithfulness. It was the object of the law to organize society in such a way that the finest women were mated with the finest men. This desirable end was not to be interfered with by any ideas of fidelity and womandry. But Sparta does not enter into the history of culture; she bred no historian to write her history, nor did she make the contribution to the knowledge or achievement of the human race.

5. Among the Egyptians

No Egyptian code of laws has been recovered, and we have no continuous record of their social customs over the 3000 years of history - a period equal in length to that which separates the present day from the fall of Troy. The fact that there are many hieroglyphic combinations which are translated by the same English word, the subtlety of the difference between which cannot be read, but seems to indicate that there was some change in the relations between the Pharaoh and the women of his household. It is sufficient, perhaps, that the people themselves seem to have been monogamous,³ and that it is not until the last days of

¹ Unwin op. cit. pp 667

² Westermarck op. cit. pp 318

³ Westermarck op. cit. pp 40

the Empire that we have information that marriage had become for them a temporary affair, easily terminated.

6. Among the Romans

The patricians were the original people of Rome. They were married by a very solemn ceremony before at least ten witnesses in the presence of the high priest called "confarreatio"¹ while the union of the plebs admitted to citizenship under the Tullian constitution was by a mock sale of the bride or sometimes simply coming together. These unions not being in accordance with the old Sabine religion of Numa, were regarded by the patricians as irregular. After a long struggle marriage between the orders were legalized in 445. And in the meantime and immediately thereafter, the patricians began to depart from their indissoluble institution; the tendency is seen in the story of Clandins and Verginia; and Antonins was excluded from the senate for putting away his wife without consultation with the family. The plebs married by mock sale ceremony are rising, the patricians are losing their domination. A little later there is the poisoning episode of the Matrons; the Licinian law passes and all the offices of the state are in turn opened to the plebs. (The Ogulinan law throwing open the office of high priest to them shows they have adopted the higher ceremony performed before ten witnesses and the high priest.) During the Third Samnite War the wife of Volumnius sets up in her house the worship of Plebeian Pundicitia, "to be honored with a holier observance and by purer worshippers than that of the patricians."² Matrons are put on public trial for adultery.

Two centuries after the expulsion of the kings, therefore,

¹ Westermarck Vol. III pp 319

² Unwin pp 667

the patricians are giving up their old rigorous customs and are falling in influence and power. The Plebians are adopting them, and they attain to power. Rome still expands and her population becomes homogeneous.

By the middle of the third century Rome is mistress of Italy. The Punic Wars put the Mediterranean under her rule. But this century also sees the changes in customs. Marriage sine in manum conventione came in with the ius gentium. These were not laws of marriage (*iustae nuptiae*) nor did they involve power or right. Marriages of this kind became frequent. Women acquired economic independence. The Mænian Law transferred the judgment of divorce from the family council to the indictum de moribus. The procedure for dissolution of marriage was thus facilitated. At the beginning of the third century Pyrrhus received a glowing account of the dignity of the Roman Senate. The power and influence of Rome was paramount.

After the Punic Wars divorces increased, marriage became an affair of temporary attachment and the upper classes declined to an alarming extent. Confarreatio disappeared and civil war arose. The plebs followed the patricians and the modification of their monogamy followed the same line as before.

It took over thirty years to pass the Lex Julia and Papia Poppaea, such was the opposition to the tightening of the marriage law, which this was designed to do. The operation of the law was assisted by the introduction of Christian marriage amongst the proletariat. There followed two centuries of peace such as have seldom been enjoyed in history. But what effect there was could not be permanent, and in

the time of Diocletian marriage has become a very loose union indeed. Husband and wife had separate estates, the lady kept her own name, and the bond between them could be easily dissolved, no reason being assignable. In the next century the Germans came down and Rome fell.

7. Among the Germans

Tacitus describes their marriage customs:

"Their marriage code is strict. They are content with one wife, except a very few of them, and these not from sensuality but because their noble birth procures for them many offers of alliance. The wife does not bring a dower to the husband but the husband to the wife-----They live uncorrupted. Clandestine correspondence is equally unknown to men and women. Very rare is their adultery the punishment for which is prompt and in the husband's power. The loss of chastity meets with no indulgence; neither beauty, youth nor wealth will procure for the culprit a husband. No one in Germany laughs at vice, nor do they call it the fashion to corrupt or to be corrupted. Only maidens are given in marriage; they receive one husband, as having one body and one life, that they may have no thoughts beyond, no further reaching desires, that they love not so much the husband as the married state."¹

These absolutely monogamous Germans swept over the Western Empire, and upon them the white civilization was founded. We next follow the course of history through its hitherto leading nation, the English.

1

Tacitus Germany pp 18-19 Translation Church and Brodribb



8. In the World Power of England

Various conquests had mixed the races resident in England. Marriage was a "private transaction taking the form of a sale of the bride by the father or guardian. ---Later on the consent of the bride seems to have been needed, and Canute made some advances in this direction ---still later the bride gained the right of self-betrothal and the parties could conduct their own ceremony."¹

Customs thus started to move in the same direction as in other societies, the parental power being gradually lessened and the contracting parties obtaining the right to act on their own responsibility. It was at this stage that the Church gained control of the institution, and by the tenth century it was the custom for the newly wedded pair to attend a regular bride mass. Soon after the clergy inherited the functions of the ancient orator, and came to direct the whole celebration, the nuptial ceremony taking place at the church door followed by mass in the church itself. The next stage was that the marriage was not valid unless conducted by a priest.² It was this control by the church which temporarily arrested the changes observed above. It preserved absolute monogamy and put all its weight against divorce and temporary unions.

At the same time, however, it proclaimed that marriage was a remedy for fornication, that celibacy was the most desirable of virtues and that virgins peopled Heaven. (The conquering Normans took to monasticism, and they gradually lost their dominant position to the conquered who were not allowed by them to enter the religious houses.)

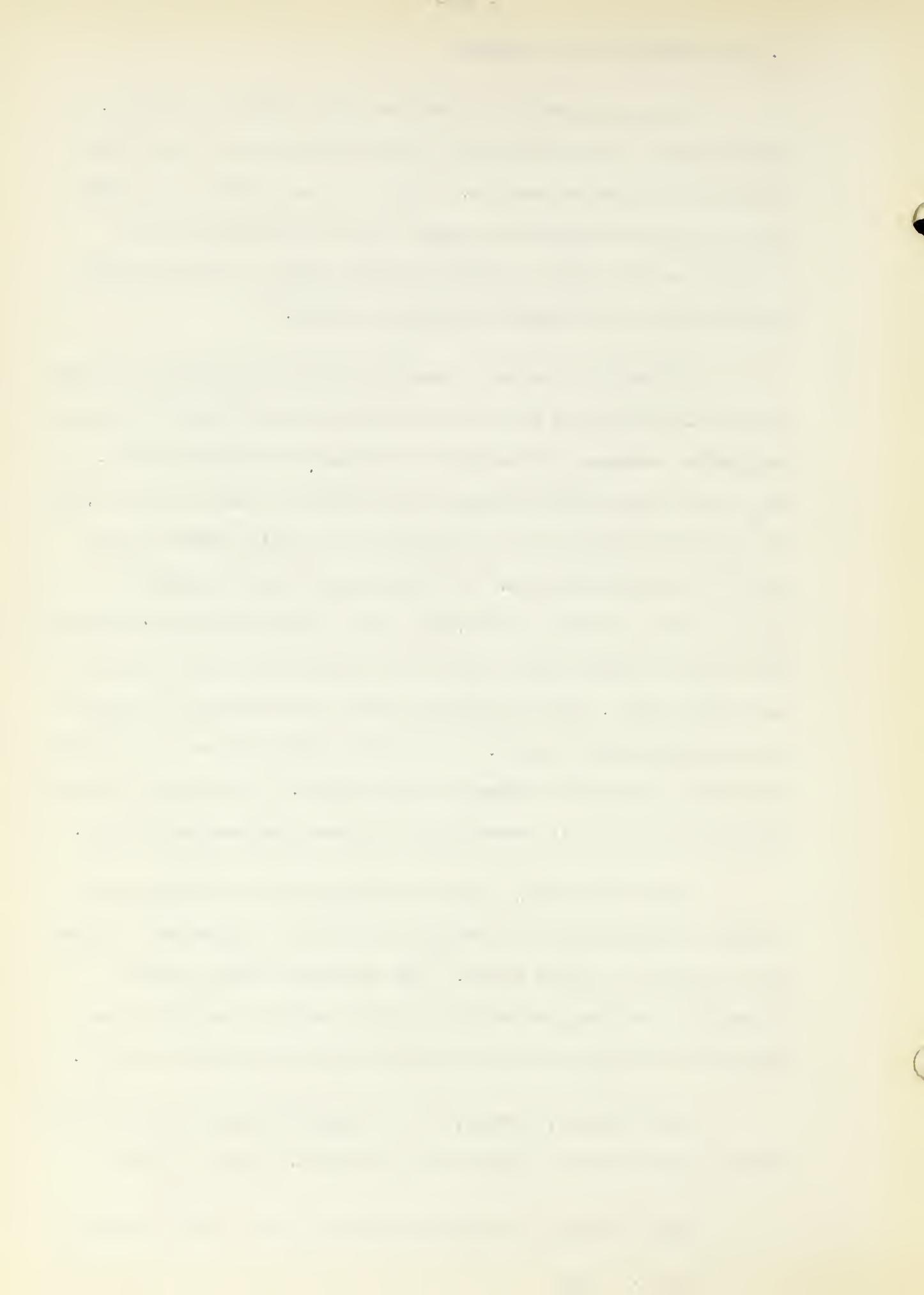
The Reformers, however, did not regard marriage from the magical point of view, nor as a concession to the flesh. It was for them the

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Howard, History of Matrimonial Institutions p. 258, 278, 281

²

Idem 1., p 308

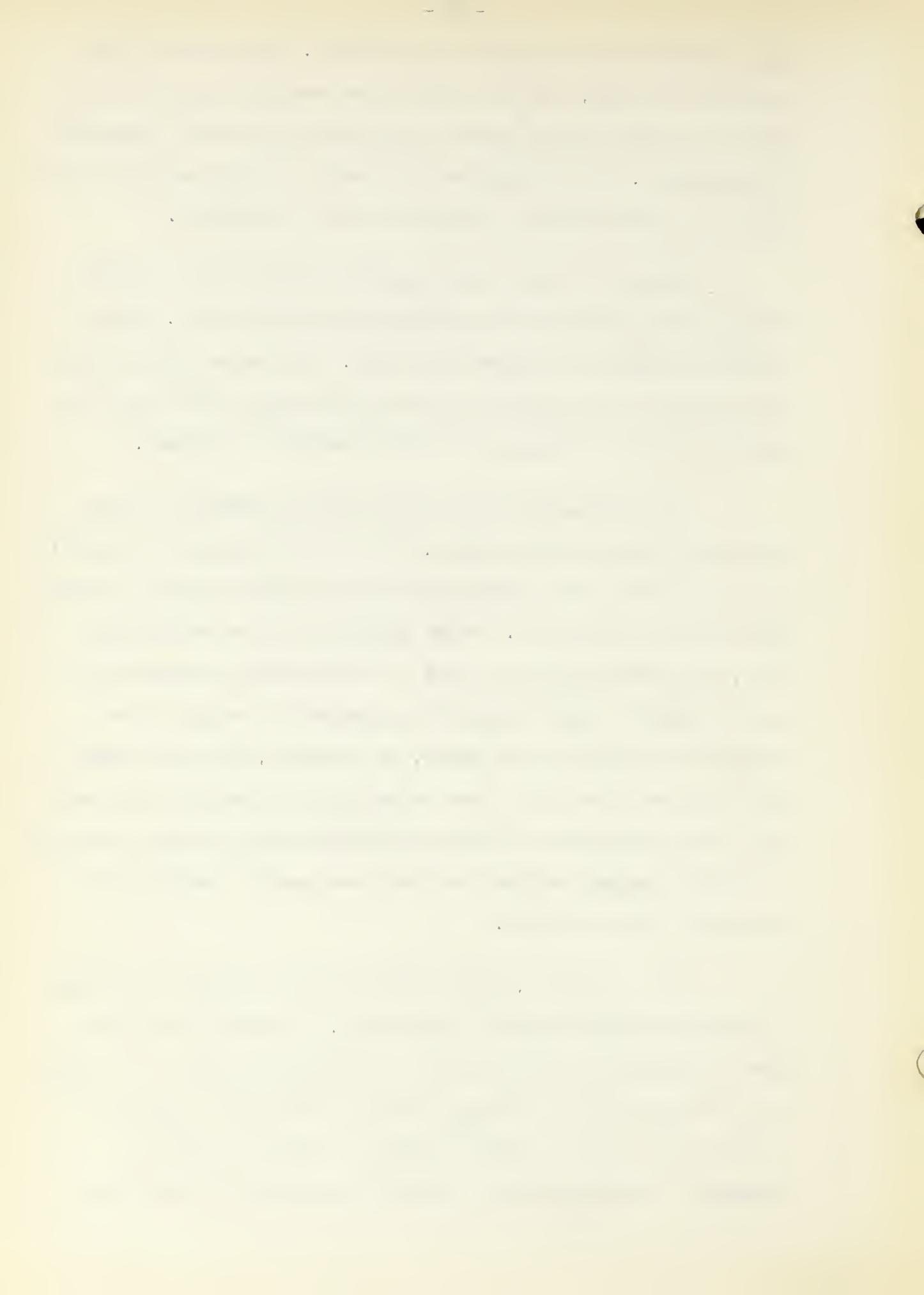


most desirable state in which a man could live. The growth of their influence and power, therefore reintroduced absolute monogamy after its practice had been much affected by organized and consistent exhortation to monasticism. The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries saw the complete adoption of their attitude, and England rose to her heights.

Marriage as a life long association continued until the nineteenth century when the first modifications were introduced. Further changes were made in the twentieth century. The changes while they had the good result of placing the two sexes upon almost equal terms, also provided methods of changing the absolute standard of monogamy.

Time produces the same changes in English marriage customs which have been observed elsewhere. The rise and expansion of England's power and influence is contemporaneous with the preservation of marriage as a life long institution. As her decline is not yet an historical fact, the evidence stops there; but it is interesting to observe that, as her methods of legal administration demanded on the part of the plaintiff possession of some wealth, and therefore, those with wealth were the first to be able to take advantage of the changes in the law, the result was that her old landed aristocracy were the first to practice a modified monogamy, and they soon lost that superior position in the state which had been theirs.

Such, in outline, are the salient facts concerning the changes in marriage customs adopted by each society. In every case where we have a continuous record, the curve of development (savagery - civilization - decrepitude) has followed parallel to the curve of marriage changes (loose unions - absolute monogamy - modified monogamy or polygyny). The big question is whether the parallel facts have any

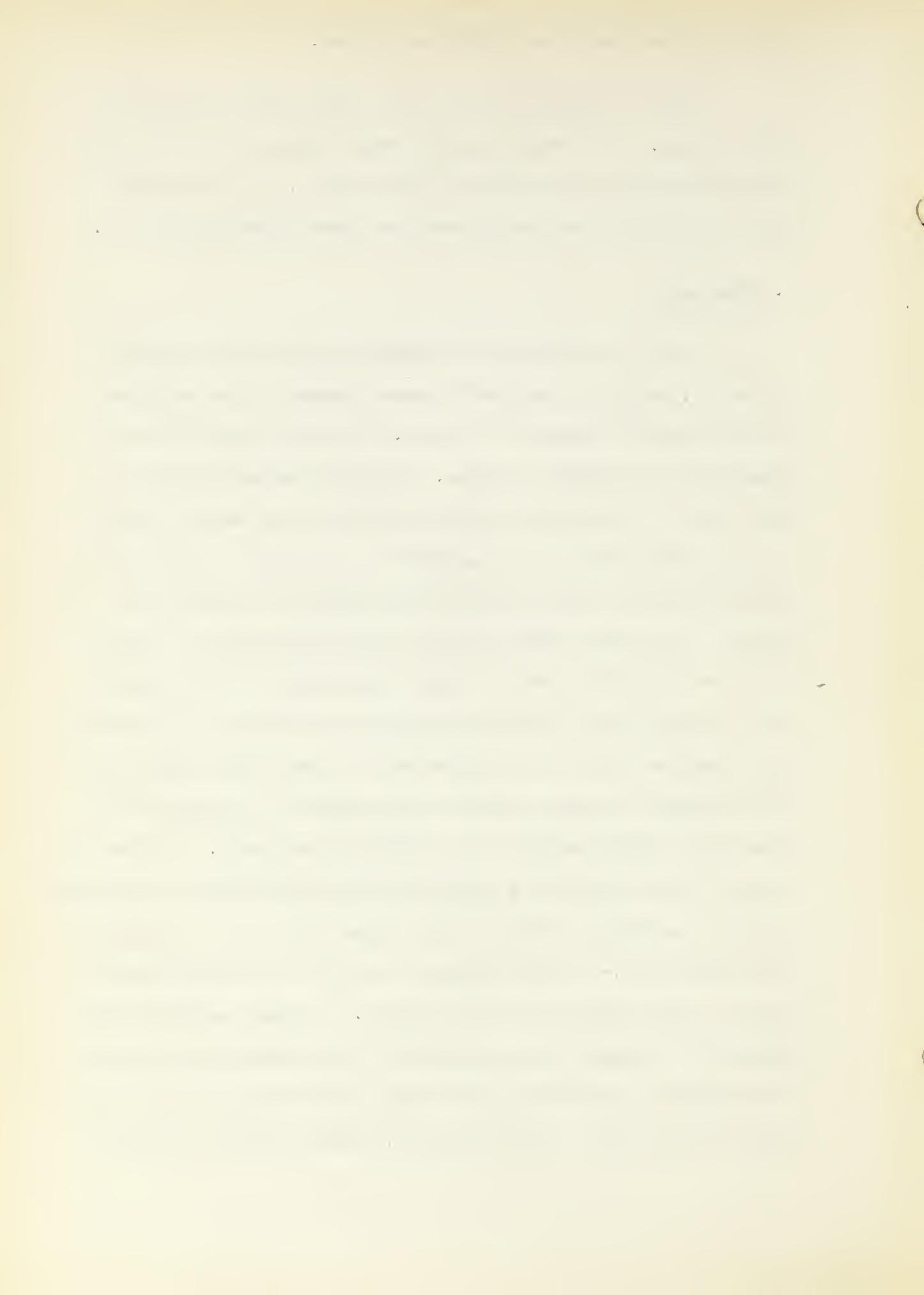


relation to one another and effect one another.

There is a simple truth in life which reveals the answer to this question. It is this - that all human achievement is the result of the sublimation of the force of life; that is, it is the product of the diversion of the innate power into other forms of expression.

9. Conclusion

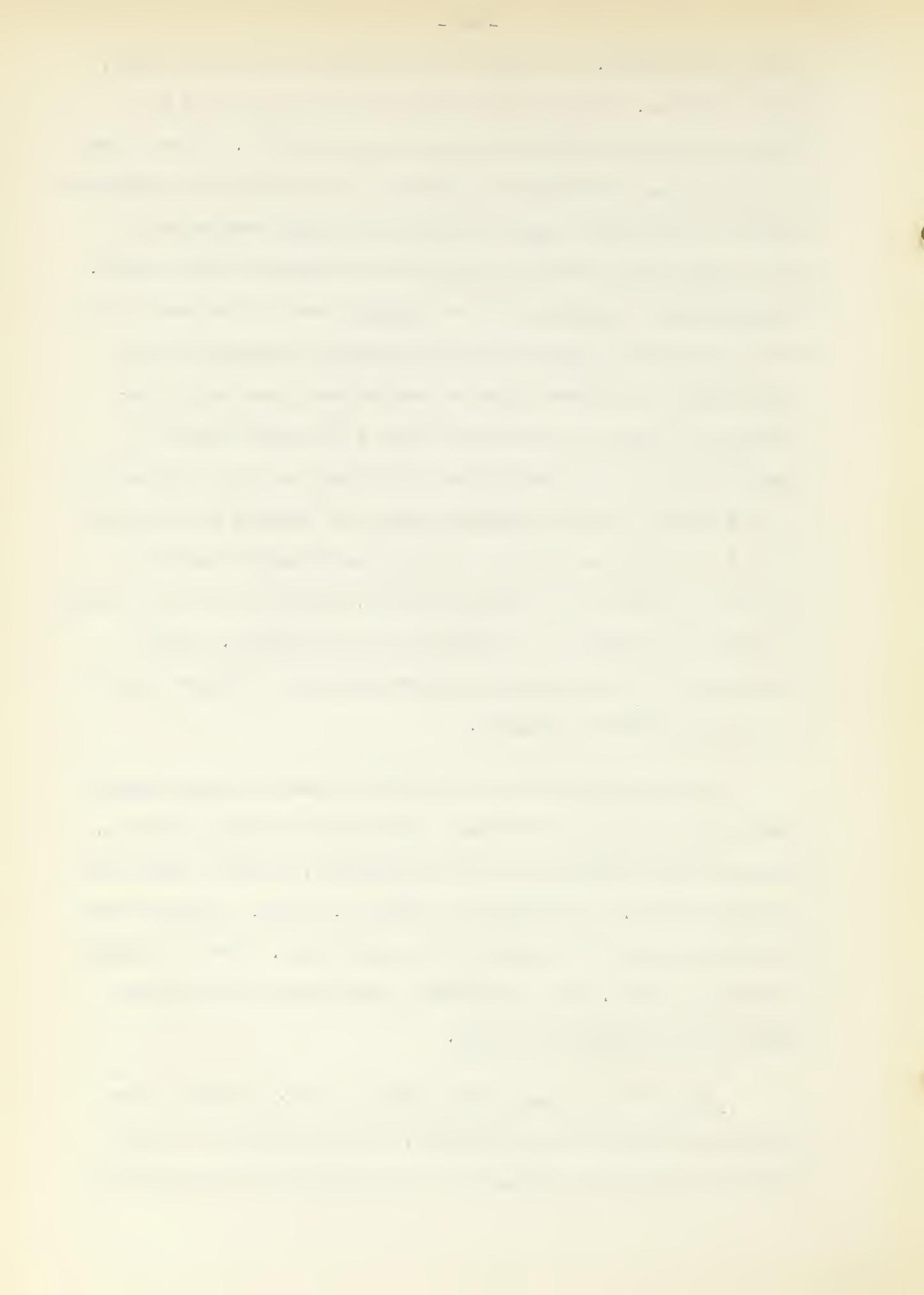
Life is a very mysterious force and that which is within a man cannot, perhaps be described as merely sexual without extending the term beyond the limit of its sense. But in its lowest form the sexual urge is admittedly powerful. Social man developing from the animal comes to regulate the relations between sexes in such a way as to place limitations upon the expenditure of the force of life in a purely animal and sexual way, and these limitations compel him to expend it in different ways and put it into other channels. Once he has gained such power over his natural surroundings and over animals as to be able to have leisure from the incessant hunt for food and the common needs of life, if the customs which he has adopted prevent him from indulging his sexual appetite as and when he is so moved, he is compelled to turn elsewhere for an outlet for his energy. If there is no one at hand to fight (and fighting is the humblest form of sublimated activity) the encorced control of his energy drives him to reflection and contemplation:- A vivid analogy of how this life energy works is that of a house wired for electric current. Two wires come into the house, but the energy is not permitted to leap directly from one wire to the other; it must rather pass through various sorts of resistance, such as electric bulbs, vacuum sweepers, washing machines, toasters,



cookers and the like. The result is the house is flooded with light, warmth and power. But let the current be short-circuited and the lights go out; the machinery stops; the coil turns cold. So man, when he erects certain resistances of control of the energy has his attention diverted to attempting things, investigating things, perhaps even to making things which previous observation has revealed as advantageous. Sticks and stones, mysteries for the primitive man, he discovers he can use and control and they become his instruments; contemplation and inquiry lead to a reformed vision of the universe; speculation concerning his relation to his fellows brings a new social outlook, a changed attitude to the generations in his clan; and so the process goes on. The tighter grow his marriage customs, the stronger the discipline he has to exercise upon himself, the less can the natural powers be indulged in satisfaction of animal appetite, and the more is he compelled to reflect upon himself, his fellows and his environment. Magic is left behind; for the mind growing, under compulsory continence, grows more and more active in progress.

As he progresses from his primitive stage it becomes apparent that he (man) can in no way directly control the processes of Nature, which are then conceived as powers in themselves, personal beings whose goodwill he seeks. The flowing of a stream i.e. Nile, like the storm and the wind comes to be regarded as a divine power. There is brought a religious outlook. While his marriage union retains its rigor the higher does man advance in culture.

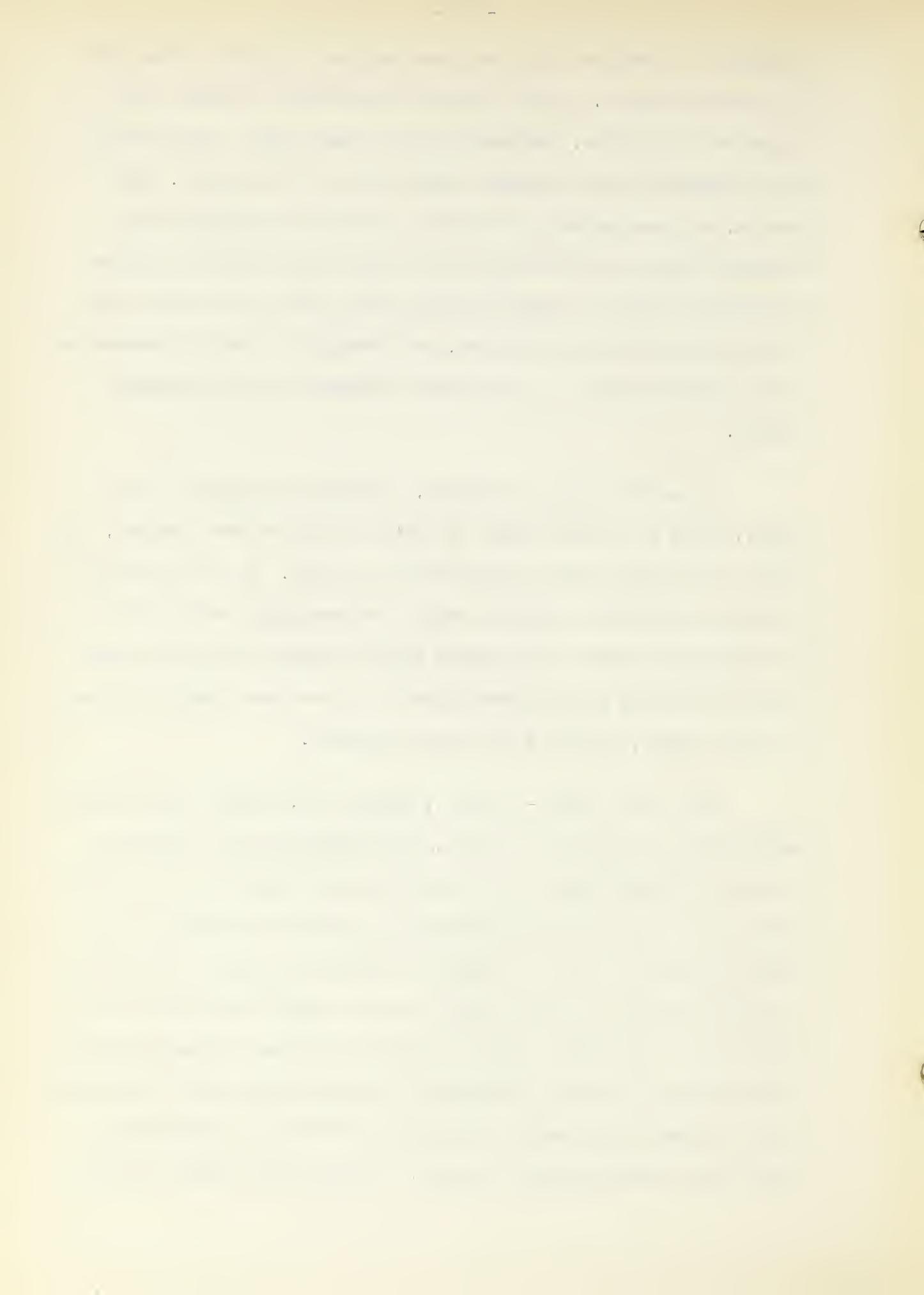
Thus it is not long before observation and experiment shows that even the divine can be controlled, and the digging of a trench will turn the flow of a stream to a part hitherto dry, with resulting



fertility - a fertility which has previously been regarded as the boon of a special goddess. Such a discovery necessitates a change in the conception of the Gods. Eventually this religion takes a social turn, and a revolution in the economic organization in life follows. Time goes on, and each generation is born to a greater discipline and an increased tradition, travelling further away from the animal condition of unfettered impulse, knowing nothing of that time in which the force of life was not rigidly controlled, and spending its years of impressionable childhood amongst new perceptions, extended aims and heightened culture.

It is this control of energy, an experience unknown to any animal, which is the first stage in man's advancement from savagery, and which is the first cause of reflection and thought. It is the force of life shut out from its primitive escape, and demanding outlet which is the fundamental cause of advancement and achievement of societies; and that which diverts it into fresh channels is none other than the dictate of social custom, the law which governs marriage.

All these things - conquest, empire, art, science - are diverse manifestations of the force of life, which controlled by an inherited tradition, demands outlet from its pent-up state; and it is this control which is the cause of those overwhelming outbursts of activity; which compels the Arab to burst over Egypt; causes the Amorites to found their tremendous commerce and raise Babylon from an insignificant city to the capital of a large empire; urges forward the Persians; drives the Greeks over Persia and the East; sends Rome to her greatness, drives the Teutons over the Roman empire; makes the Spaniard sail the seas, the Athenian philosophize and the English colonize. As long as the force of life is



wisely directed and driven in seeking normal function it must be driven through sublimated forms of manifestation, and so long does achievement continue.

But the statement still persists that the life force tends to flow back to its original source and, therefore, the free expression of it is most natural and consequently right. Because a thing is natural does not make it right. Man's greatest progress has been made in cases where the natural method has been transgressed. Unless rigidly compelled to turn into other channels, the life force does incline toward more facile paths of expression. The loosening of the marriage bond - that is, the gradual return to a temporary union made and broken by mutual consent or releases the compulsion. The outlook reverts to what it was at first. The social vision, imposed upon society by the rigor of its own customs returns to regard for the present only. Pride in the past - responsibility for the future both disappear. And when a generation arrives which has known no sterner discipline, but which spends its early years in an atmosphere of submission to impulse it does not add one whit to what has gone before, but sinking into unrelieved lethargy, ekes out its meager existence in the grip of forces which is no longer able to control. Its energy sapped by its own indulgence, its vision reduced to a single dimension it finds that it can no longer cope with the ultimate causes of things and there comes a loss of affirmation, a failure of nerve, a denial of the gods and a despondent fear of the future.

CHAPTER IV

Monogamy Is More Consistent with the Highest Human Welfare

1. Provides basis for largest growth of men and women.

In a complicated order of society such as ours (and the future must be more so) the relationship between men and women which will contribute to the richest experience of the individuals and the largest welfare of the race cannot be carried on between more than one man and one woman. Upon the recording of that statement the exponents of freer relationships between men and women, divorce by mutual consent and companionate marriage quickly rise up and challenge it. They tell us that there are men and women doing it and doing it successfully.¹ They further state that men and women have done it in the past and a host of names are given Goethe, Wagner, de Maupassant and others. The facts, however, are not tenable, and in every case there is a question as to whether physical functioning did not coerce the rest of the personality. Further, where they see elements of success by the expanded personality of the one party they cannot find similar elements of growth in personality of the second party in the relationship. In other words one individual or both eventually suffers. One is exploited. Guy de Maupassant illustrates a type and the following from his biography shows that it did not make a free personality for him.

Life was to Maupassant a "procession of human animals" or rather, of human bodies full of primitive animal desire. As long as he was young he participated in this procession with a truly animal delight. It was as Mr. Boyd justly emphasizes it a real "sexual obsession" to which he constantly paid tribute both in his life and in his writings. He walked through life like a monomaniac, with his eyes

¹Lindsay & Evans, op. cit. pp V - VIII

fixed on woman's body, perceiving nothing around, believing in nothing. Religion, philosophy, politics - all were concealed from his eyes by this erotic vision. "I should like to have a thousand arms in order to embrace at one time an army of these charming and unimportant creatures" - such was his dream of life.

He was, however, sometimes obliged to flee and avoid by all imaginable devices some of his too self-assertive mistresses.

As years went on, the "procession of bodies" began to assume more and more often a different aspect. Maupassant saw before his eyes not happy and smiling Venuses but hideous "idiots, brutes, drunkards, parricides" monsters of physical deformity and ugliness. And here the tragedy of old age, of the ineluctable dilapidation and death, of the futility of all things earthly, horrified and tortured his mind. Mr. Boyd is undoubtedly right when he adds autobiographic significance to a short story in which Maupassant says:-

"Every day, when shaving, I have a great desire to cut my throat. Several times my face, which never changes, reflected in the little glass, with soap on my cheeks, has made me weep from sadness ---. Every brain is a circus in which a poor imprisoned horse runs round and round. Whatever our efforts, our twists and turns, the boundary is near, rounded continuously, without any unexpected unevenness, without any gate leading to the unknown."

The germ of insanity began to develop in Maupassant's strange mind.

The first hallucination which deeply impressed him - he saw his double sitting in his chair - the unexplainable fear which pervaded him time and time again and against which he struggled with all the forces of his still undisturbed logic, the despair which tortured him when he realized that this was the beginning of madness and the heroic efforts at concealing all this from the eyes of his friends and relatives - all is drawn by Mr. Boyd with a convincing accuracy and dramatism. The reader sees how the malady followed its relentless course, how attacks of persecution mania, periods of febrile excitement and days of complete relapse became more and more frequent, how the unfortunate writer agonized and suffered witnessing the progressive disintegration of his mind how, finally after having tried to kill himself with a steel paper knife, he was brought in a straight jacket to Dr. Blanche's asylum in Passy -----.

Mr. Sherard asserts that Maupassant's erotic twist of mind must be ascribed to the microbe of that disease which finally caused his insanity and death. Maupassant as viewed in the light of Spirochaeta Pallida - such might be the title of his disheveled and planless book. But the twist of mind was characteristic of Maupassant long before the fatal microbe settled in him.¹

We have from Isadore Duncan once an ardent exponent of looser union between men and women in "My Life" the confession of its lack of satisfaction. In his book "Love and Greenwich Village" Floyd Dell gives the story of the unhampered experimenting and the free love of youth, tried to their hearts content or discontent. We see the heart break, the disillusionment, the torn and bleeding edges of personality left after the utmost freedom in functioning, even in a section of society which had no social disapproval for their acts. He writes as

¹ Alex I. Nazaroff's Review of Lives of Maupassant by Ernest Boyd and R.H. Sherard in N.Y. Times Book Review Nov. 21, 1926 pp.9-10

follows:-

"We met each other at the Liberal Club and became good friends. We were very fond of talk. We talked over everything in the wide world ----- And incidently we agreed in disbelieving in marriage. We considered it a stupid relic of the barbaric past, a ridiculous and tyrannical convention. We were altogether enchanted with each others enlightened opinions.

"One evening as Rosemary and I talked, there came in the midst of our intellectual discussion a pause - a moment in which we gazed at each other in one of those silences that can end only in a kiss. And a moment later we knew - what everybody else no doubt could have told us all along, that we were in love.

"The occasion seemed to demand a pledge of some kind. And so, instead of promising, in the old fashioned way, to be true to each other, we promised in a more modern fashion that each would be true to himself. "And said Rosemary, when the time comes, and one of us falls in love with somebody else, we won't lie about it. We will tell each other and part. Freely and without regrets or recriminations.

"These were our vows - to be courageously candid in our expected and inevitable unfaithfulness. For we knew, intellectually that the time would come when we would no longer love each other. Instinctively we could not believe it - to speak of such a thing at a time like this was secretly a hurt to our deepest feelings. But we believed in facing the facts. We were reasonable, intellectual, modern young people. And there is no doubt about it - we felt superior to the common run of mankind." ¹

¹ Floyd Dell - Love in Greenwich Village pp 239 - 251

To their surprise, the Greenwich Villagers discovered that their experiment wouldn't work. They loved each other at first and aimed at a temporary union which proved temporary. They could not escape the problems of mating merely by leaving out the marriage ceremony. Regretfully they had to confess the failure of their romance because they found in it to their surprise all or nearly all the problems of institutional marriage and also other problems. Each of them tried other similar experiments and met similar disillusioning failure. Finally these ex-villagers found happiness in marriages based upon comradeship and common interests.

When the factors essential to the finest relationship between men and women are brought together there is fairly wide agreement among those who express themselves as authorities in this field. It is practically axiomatic, however, that love must grow as life grows.

"Two young people who are to form permanent partnerships must, if they are to be happy and successful, have personalities which will stimulate, reinforce and develop each other without major thwartings. In the course of their fitting together they must ultimately attain full physical functioning in harmony with their own ethical and aesthetic ideals and with the approval of their social group. The process by which the two personalities are interlocked must involve the full intensity of romantic love."¹

Having the above requirements the test of their union only begins with marriage. The first test and most important is the integrating of their purposes. Real integration of purpose is a far different thing from merely letting each other alone; it is different from justice it is even different from recognizing that the wife is useful to the

¹ Hart Hornell, Science of Social Relations p 394

husband, and the husband useful to the wife and hence cooperating for mutual advantage. Integration of purpose means the merging of activities for a common end; it is the development of united ideals to which both husband and wife are devoted. The building of a home, the education of the children, the development of a common center of social intercourse where those outside the family may share its joy - such objectives as these serve not only to unite the husband and wife on a joint financial policy which eliminates the conflict characteristic of a disintegrating marriage, but they also release repressed energies.

This unity of integration of purpose is an ideal applicable to all the relationships in the family. Shall the wife take a job outside the home? How shall the evenings be spent? Who shall be invited to supper? What church shall be attended? What new clothes shall be purchased? What attitude shall be taken toward the children? Countless problems such as these find their ideal solution when husband and wife can weave their separate purposes into a common fabric in which each supports and enhances rather than distorts and thwarts the other.

Another test will be their desire and ability to complete each other's personality. Ideal matching of personalities at the start rarely, if ever, occurs. The two must be fitted by a long process of creative accommodation. The husband needs to study with sympathetic insight the possible activities of the wife, her desires for self-expression her artistic cravings, her wish to do things of real value in the world, and he should expend eager thought and energy in the effort to enable her to achieve these desires. The wife should seek to understand her husband's professional or business ambitions, his tastes and likings, his need for recreation, and should discover how she can best promote his wholesome

and creative strivings.

Imagine then one woman endeavoring to merge her interests and compliment the personalities of three husbands. Imagine one man endeavoring to meet these tests (given above) with three wives. It is a physical impossibility for one man or one woman to maintain and deepen this complete and richest experience with more than one woman or man at one time.

Romantic love in particular is a relatively recent invention. Monogamy favors the exploration and development in this field, as promiscuity and polygyny do not. "Observation and history shows that the normal person finds full and well rounded satisfaction of instincts only in a life-long communion with the object of love. The personality which falls short of this and attempts to get satisfaction by a series of casual, selfish experiences, is nothing but a personality suffering from arrested development. It has not attained to adult stature, but has remained at the infantile level, when the whole world is valued in terms of the immediate gratification that it furnishes to one's senses."¹

The constant ethical factors in the relationship of husband and wife may be divided into two groups. The first concerns more directly human character, the second more directly domestic and racial welfare. In actual life, welfare and character of course intimately interlock and interact. But the theoretic division appears justifiable in the interest of clearness.

"Altruistic disinterestedness, the sense of responsibility and the habit of self-control few would seriously question of paramount

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Popenoe, Paul - Modern Marriage

importance for the individual and collective well-being. Their growth and maintenance are to a very great extent dependent upon the monogamous family institution and extra marital continence.

"In the first place, repeated yielding to sex impulses on the physical plane tends as a matter of common human experience to weaken moral fiber, to lessen resistant power, to emasculate will force, to bring to pass an increasing domineering of the sex-urge over individual life. The normal corrective for this relaxed self-mastery is the corresponding acceptance within the marital state of the responsibilities toward mate and offspring not toward mates and offspring. The monogamous marital relations ties up the sex sphere to definite and abiding responsibilities, and at the same time ties up the anarchic sex instinct to the high self, to the "whole of life."¹

"Secondly, the monogamous family institution is a training school for the two individuals concerned in loyalty, unselfish love, forbearance, tolerance, earnestness, constancy, persistent courage, mutual sympathy, and helpfulness - human qualities which, practically all sane folks agree, make directly for individual and collective well being. How frequently in the case of newly married couples, particularly after the birth of their first child do we see the vital change that comes over both husband and wife - a putting away of the trivial and weekly sentimental, a deepening and enriching of the finer sentiments, a sobering sense of marital and parental responsibility, a flowering of unselfishness. Under the magic of the monogamic form of family responsibility, even the painted doll often grows into a woman and the callow stripling into a man."²

It is true that responsibility accompanies the sex relationship

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Cooper J. M., American Journal of Social Hygiene Oct. 1920 p 462

²

Cooper J. M. op. cit. pp 462 - 463

in other forms of marriage, but there is a loop hole of freedom through which one individual may exploit the other. Consequently the same resultant high and ennobling qualities of character do not obtain.

To approach the matter from a third angle: "There are two clearly distinct phases of sex instinct, sexual gratification on the physical plane and love. Passion and love are commonly intertwined and coexistant. But it is possible, not merely as a theoretic abstraction but in the realities of life, to isolate the one from the other, or to find them isolated. Each has certain distinctive characteristics. Above all, passion is primarily self regarding. It seeks chiefly its own gratification, its own self-pleasure. Love, on the other hand, is primarily other-self-regarding. It seeks chiefly the good and happiness and well being of the one loved. Extramarital indulgence or indulgence with other than the one loving wife tends normally to divorce love from passion, to emphasize passion at the expense of love, to seek sexual gratification bereft of its correlative love. Both passion and love are instinctive impulses and follow the laws of instinct and habit. Use and exercise strengthen. Disuse and lack of exercise weaken. Cohabiting with other than the loving wife tends to give use and exercise to passion while neglecting or inhibiting the love impulses. The former tends, therefore, to wax apace while the latter tends to atrophy. Such incontinence consequently stamps it and hardens the self regarding, the selfish attitude and outlook, first of all in the great sphere of sex and through extension, irradiation, or counter-sublimation in varying measure in the rest of life."¹

¹ Cooper op. cit. p. 463

This third angle has been greatly befogged and much confusion surrounds it because of the partial truth in the phrase, "fall in love." One can fall into love just as one can plunge into a stream, but the beauties of that on going stream cannot be experienced by a person if one remains at the point of entrance. We work or climb into love more than we "fall into love." Dr. Frank Crane in his advice to young married or engaged couples has always made much of this point. He says, "love is loyalty. Love is spelled not L-O-V-E but L-O-Y-A-L. If we are loyal in thought and deed, love will grow without growth, and after fifty years will glow as sweetly and as steadfastly as in the first delirious morning of desire."¹

Hornell Hart in the "Science of Social Relations" writes on this point of the growing love and marriage: "Normally there is an element which saves true marriage from monotony; it is the continued assimilation into the joint personality of new experience. The building of a home, the making of joint friendships, the coming of the children, the economic struggles of the family, the working out of the problem of the releasing and fulfillment of the personality of the wife under changing conditions of modern economic life -all these and countless other insistent stimuli present themselves to generate married emotion. If the attitudes of the husband and wife toward these stimuli are creative, then the resultant emotion can flourish in the form of enthusiasm, laughter and growing love; if they take negative attitudes, then the same stimuli may breed distrustive emotional energy. The latter type of energy must eventually come from the liaison, the plural wives or husbands, for it continues to keep the relationship

¹ Crane Frank, Rules For A Happy Marriage,
American Magazine pp 51

between man and woman on a sex plane." The plane which Popenoe says is infantile level of life, when the whole world is viewed in terms of the immediate gratification that it furnishes to one's senses." The deepest love and passion is so ardent that there is no room for the many. "The man who rushes up each little ascent will never get the all inclusive view. The mountain top is reached by those who give themselves to it with single hearts and utter devotion. This problem of progressive accommodation becomes then the central issue in the preservation of married happiness."¹

Apart from the general regard for the feelings of women, there are in sexual love itself certain elements that tend to make men inclined to restrict themselves to one wife, at least for some time. "The sociable interest" says Bain, "is by its nature diffused: revenge does not desire to have but one victim; the love of domination needs many subjects; but the greatest intensity of love limits the regards to one."² The beloved person acquires, in the imagination of the lover, an immeasurable superiority over all others. The favorite wife of the harem, the favorite husband of the polyandrous union are examples.

The widest experience from which data can be gathered and the ethical position which finds no shred of justification for a double standard of sex establish monogamy as the ideal for the largest growth of men and women. But indulgence on the part of the man involves indulgence on the part of the woman. If the sex impulse of the man is stronger, then there is all the more need of self control, control made imperative in the interests of the welfare of others and of the man's own higher freedom.

¹ Hart op. cit. pp 396-397

² Bain Alex, Emotions and the Will pp 136

If we want true monogamy we must attach a selective value to control and provide social conditions under which it can be practised. So long as we shrug our shoulders at the young man "sowing his wild oats" so long as women assess each other's social value on the amount of physical attraction that can be exerted on the opposite sex, so long shall we favor conditions of promiscuity and degeneracy and just so will society fail to develop the "normal adult" through whom it can make its largest progress.

2. Family life will realize its highest development under monogamy

The primitive family was metronymic and from the agreement of the largest number of authorities we are justified in concluding that a simple pairing monogamy was mainly the form of union which prevailed between the sexes during the period of savagery.¹ The larger part of the time the relation of the children was predominantly with the mother rather than with the father. This was due to the fact that the mother was the stable element in the family relation. In all human society the female has been more stationary and settled, the male more nomadic, and this was especially true in primitive times; for, as we have already pointed out, the men were largely occupied with hunting and gathering food, while the mothers were largely occupied with the care of the children. This primitive family seems to have persisted among nearly all peoples with little change until war began. War naturally brought the capture of women. These captured women were saved for purposes of intercourse. In some cases, they were held as trophies and as wives or concubines by powerful single warriors. In some other cases, however, they seem to have been used as common women by all the men of the group.

¹ Goodsell W. Problems of the Family pp 2

We have here the beginnings of three important institutions, namely slavery, polygyny and prostitution. All writers have recognized that women thus captured were the very first slaves. While we perhaps do not have here the very first beginnings of polygyny, we have its main stimulus or cause. The same statement may be made regarding prostitution. There is little evidence to support the view that either polygyny or prostitution was common until women were captured in war. Through all the ages since war began, these forms of sex relationships have accompanied war, and we are justified in concluding that in their development, if not in their origin, they are intimately connected with the practice of taking women captive in war.

This practice, too, as much as anything brought to an end the metronymic family. An economic condition was developed in which instinctive monogamy could not continue. It is not an accident that the metronymic family very early disappeared among the warlike peoples of Europe and Asia. War tended not only to enslave captive women, but to subordinate all women. The mighty warrior who held women among his trophies not only laid claim to his captured wives and their children, but asserted his superiority over other women with whom he had come into relations peacefully. The exaltation of the male element in human society through war and through the development of the pastoral industry, therefore, led inevitably to the supremacy of the male in sex relations and in the family, and so to the patronymic and finally to the patriarchal family.

"It is the patriarchal family which we find universally among the civilized peoples of Europe and Asia at the beginning of recorded history. Among some peoples such as the Hebrews it was polygynous in character, which among others such as the Romans, for a time it was monogamous, until wars introduced the concubinage system with female slaves.

This type of family was highly despotic or authoritarian. Among many peoples, like the early Hebrews and the early Romans, practically supreme power was lodged in the hands of the house father. This practice, however, could be maintained only as long as families were relatively isolated. The power of the patriarchal house father was bound to deteriorate with the formation of larger social units, and it did so rapidly. It left behind, however, the spirit of its form in all social organization. The authoritarian form which had been given to the family and to society generally by a militant organization radiated to all human institutions. The patriarchal family decayed, but there was little or no attempt to reconstruct the family and sex relations upon a higher basis. In fact one is struck in a study of Greek and Roman society by the lack of any tendency to find a higher basis for the family and sex relations. Apparently the only two tendencies were either to drift in the direction of irregular promiscuity or to go back to the old patriarchal form of the family. To some extent these are the two main tendencies evident in our society at the present time. The intervening centuries witnessed the attempt of the church to reestablish the family upon a semi-patriarchal or authoritarian basis. The advent of modern democracy has, however, rendered such an organization of the family untenable and in the confusion which now exists apparently no clear ideal has emerged for the family life which is accepted by the masses."¹

As in the case of all other human institutions, it was inevitable that many crude experiments should be tried with the family when power to do so came into man's hands. The invention of agriculture so increased the food supply that it was possible for some classes to

¹ Ellwood, Charles A., Cultural Evolution pp 198 - 199

attempt the support of more than one wife. This was all the more possible because women were the main agricultural laborers. The advent of war and of the capture of women in war, gave an additional stimulus of polygyny. The practice, however, was limited on the one hand by the fact it had made the sexes numerically equal under normal social conditions, and on the other hand by the limitations upon wealth and food supply. A considerable excess of women over men in a population was possible only either through the killing off of men in war or through the capture or importation of women. The limitations of wealth and food supply moreover, could be overcome only by victorious militant groups and then only for their nobility. Thus polygyny never got a hold on the masses of mankind, even less did the other form of polygamy which we call polyandry. Polyandry as an experiment in the organization of the family was limited to a few peoples in very unfavorable environments, in which the hard conditions of life made it difficult for one man to support one woman and her offspring. Under such conditions the polyandrous relation was tolerated, though the male jealousy prevented it from ever becoming common. Even among the peoples who tolerated it we find it a rather exceptional form of marriage existing along side of monogamy and sometimes even of polygyny.

" More common and probably more significant than polygyny or polyandry in the development of the family has been the tendency in certain peoples and ages to develop unstable sex relations and family life. This has been a pronounced tendency in every people and in every age which has experienced great economic prosperity, unless religious scruples prevented it, or unless such institutions as polygyny and concubinage veiled it. The economic prosperity of the modern world, together with the decay of religious scruples regarding the family, has made this tendency very

pronounced in our civilization, and especially in the United States. A large number of students of social conditions have interpreted this movement to signify that the trend of culture is in the direction of relatively free, shifting sex relations, or so called "free love". This is questionable for the increase of divorce and of shifting sex relations as shown earlier seems to have characterized every period of decadence in culture, and appears to be a phenomenon of social disintegration and dissolution rather than a phenomenon of normal social development. In other words it is pathological. It is again one of those crude experiments which men try when power comes into their hands and when they find that old adjustments no longer work well. The authoritarian family life of the past has broken down and has practically disappeared from whole classes in our society. The democratic type of family is now being worked out. It will be realized only when both the individual and the family life itself have been much more fully socialized than they are at present. In the meantime we have a reign of individualism, and unsocialized individualism means instability in family relations. With the advent of the more fully socialized individual with a sense of social responsibility for his (or her) sex and family relations, we have every reason to expect a return to a more stable family life." ¹

The realization of this socialized individual is no longer a fantastic dream. The whole shift in education during the present decade, more especially the last five years has been toward this end. The spread of democracy through the nations of the world and with the over throw of monarchies has created a demand for intellectual methods adequate to the issues with which a democracy has to deal. Through this leaders in the

¹ Ellwood C. A. op. cit. pp 200 - 201

educational field have come to recognize in the family a fertile field for training for group action and group learning, and to see in the family group a disseminating center for the social or democratic ideal.

"The socialized family of the future cannot be polygynous or polyandrous, for the reasons which we have pointed out. Neither can it be an unstable loose union and meet its social responsibilities; thus it must be a relatively permanent monogamy. The basis for this relatively permanent monogamy, however, will not be instinct or romantic emotion alone; it will be fortified by a sense of the responsibility of the family group to society at large. Not instinct nor individual self-interest, but a sense of social responsibility will be the basis of its stability. The concrete basis of this responsibility will be the child. Human family life started, as we have seen, in child care. The family has been the cradle and carrier of culture, because it has been the primary nurture group for children. Its primary function has always been child care, and a family is socially normal in proportion as it recognizes that this is its function. War and slavery have tended to set up some other function for the family and make it primary, such as sex gratification and the happiness of adults. If the family, however, is to become socialized, a first step must be the reaffirmation of its primary function of child care. This means that the family must develop in the long run toward stability. We saw that stability in the primitive family depended upon child care. We have every reason to believe that stability will return to the family life when its function of child care is recognized as primary."¹

In consideration of the welfare of society through the children no other form has provided such care and development for the child as

¹ Ellwood, C. A. op. cit. pp 200 - 201

monogamy. Not as the common property of the tribe or community, the offspring of the harem, the foundling of an asylum, the inmate of an institution or as the casual result of promiscuous mating has the child been so precious and so cared for as in the home of two permanent and loyal parents. As Westermarck says, "It is for the benefit of the young that male and female continue to live together. Marriage is, therefore, rooted in the family." In this regard monogamy is in a class by itself.

The democratic family life in which the parents look upon the child as a "bundle of potentialities" to be developed, will call forth all the talent resident in the parents. It can hardly provide opportunity for either the husband or the wife to maintain a liaison with the accompanying overwhelming emotional experience, outside of it.

So far in the history of the family, the public pledge of fidelity between man and woman has served better than anything else to guarantee to children the up-bringing in a home where their interests are given proper attention, and their minds directed along the most useful lines. The value of this must be increased as the "ethical monogamy" of the future is approximated.

3. Woman is being liberated from male dominance through it

Monogamy has given woman her highest place and development. Through the long stages of promiscuity, tribal and group marriages, polygyny, polyandry and other forms no other system has given her such high position and character. No longer the slave or serf, the drudge or the plaything, the tool or puppet, the property or possession of man by capture or purchase, woman has found a more honored and enduring

place, a happier and higher personal development as the single cherished wife of one husband, and as a mother caring for her own children who are blessed with two parents than under any other system.

"Humanity's major error, the exploitation of the female by the male, has not only kept her at the lowest step in social progress - solitary hand labor in and for the family - but has resulted in excessive sex - development through prolonged misuse. This has made her ultra-feminine, to a degree often injurious to motherhood; and him ultra-masculine, his social advance confused, impeded and repeatedly destroyed by his excessive emotions. In social morals he has of course outdistanced her, as he alone has entered into the relationships which develop them, but he has carefully exempted his essentially male activities from her elevating influence, maintaining on the basis that 'all's fair in love and war.' Of her, domestic morality demanded but one virtue, sex loyalty, in case of failure her mate or master taking it upon himself to be both judge and executioner. She might be a liar and a coward, lazy, selfish, extravagant or cruel, but if chaste these traits were overlooked. If unchaste, no array of other virtues was enough to save her. In her household labors she developed minor virtues natural to the position, a tireless industry, an instinct for cleanliness and order with great capacity for self denial and petty economy. Speaking broadly of a race when the young, though necessarily inheriting from both parents, yet are divided almost from birth in training and experience, it may be said that the social virtues have belonged to men, the domestic virtues to women."¹

"With the freedom due her and which she is achieving among the

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Gilman C. P. Toward Monogamy, Nation June 11, 1924 pp 672

liberty loving Nordics, the woman no longer admits that he shall rule over her. She is able to modify the laws, and is attaining economic freedom. Her previous master has no hold upon her beyond natural attraction and persuasion. Whereas in the past women were taught that they had no such 'imperative instincts' as men, and the woer, even the husband, sought to preserve this impression; now it is quite other-¹ wise."

In the human species she has added to racial progress the invention of our primitive industries, which were evolved by her in service to the young, and later carried out by men into the trades and crafts which support human life. In the developing care and nurture of her children she laid the foundation for those social functions of government, education and cooperative industry which are so vitally important to social progress that we have called the family "the unit of the state." It is only in the monogamour marriage that she could walk at the side of her mate and together work out a social morality for the advancement of society.

Further it is only from a condition of that kind where the woman and her husband has walked together for an extended period of life that the deep reality of conjugal love as described by Mrs. Browning can be written:-

"How I do love thee? Let me count the ways.
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
For the ends of being and ideal grace.
I love thee to the level of every day's
Most quiet need, by sun and candle light.
I love thee freely, as men strive for right.
I love thee purely, as they turn from praise

¹ Gilman C. P. op. cit. pp 672

I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs and with my childhood's faith
I love thee with the love I seemed to lose
With my lost saints - I love thee with the breath
Smiles, tears, of all my life! - and, if God choose,
I shall but love thee better after death."¹

¹

Browning Elizabeth Barrett, Sonnets from the Portuguese #43

CHAPTER V

Appraisal of the Arguments Against Monogamy

1. Coercive Character of the Marriage Bond.

In order to secure another view of the field of argument it is profitable to look at monogamy from the viewpoint of those who do not recognize it as a social ideal. With one voice they attack the theory, so long sanctioned by Church and State, of a life-long union of man and woman, primarily for the propagation and nurture of offspring. They declare that the permanent bonds which society fastens upon young people in marriage frequently prove to be galling chains, fettering body and spirit in a relationship that has become intolerable and subversive of the true interests of a developing personality. They point out that the more people understand their own natures, the more they will hesitate to promise love and fidelity for life. In the opinion of these critics of monogamy, not only is such a procedure on the part of society responsible for intense unhappiness and atrophy of personal growth, but it renders impossible the selection of a more suitable mate, with whom the individual might have a deeply ennobling experience. A perfect union they claim must have perfect freedom as its condition.

Marriage in the judgment of these writers is incompatible with personal freedom. When a man and woman are united for life by a religious or civil rite, the partner possessing the stronger personality will seek to subordinate the other, knowing full well that his or her mate cannot escape the yoke of marriage. The result is an increase in the number of the unmarried of both sexes, who rebel against the mouse-trap like structure of marriage. The instant those attracted by the bait have entered the trap, the door snaps and is closed forever behind them.

The indictment does not end here. Not only does monogamic marriage frequently prevent the finest flowering of love by denying it freedom, not only does it tend to subordinate women and keep them in a dependent condition, but it throws two human beings together into such a close and perpetual intimacy (into which no others may be admitted) that it is only too apt to result in what Edward Carpenter calls an "egoisme a deux."

The first criticism that the intelligent student of the subject must offer to this coercive force in monogamy and its solutions in the philosophy of love's freedom is Chapter 3, which has to do with moral, spiritual and cultural advancement attained by the average man and woman in history. This coercive, binding force in monogamy has put iron into the character of mankind, through which mankind has had the patience and endurance to achieve and progress.

It is true that there has been a great change and revolt taking place in our marriage relations, but it is just as reasonable to expect that it is going to purify and improve our monogamy as it is to believe that this revolt will destroy monogamy. We have at present a materialistic age, a jazz era, marked, above all, by a frenzied search for pleasure in the guise of "thrills," and the revolt has been widespread, not alone against the external restraints of custom and convention, but quite as much against those minor controls that are self-imposed. We are living in an age of social changes so rapid as to be bewildering, wherein the swift current of life has torn many people from their moorings. No doubt the next generation will have recovered its balance, and have moved on

and up to a moral level on which material possessions, physical thrills, constantly varied stimulation and intense absorption in self-advancement do not seem goals of supreme worth.

Even now there are thousands of men and women in every land to whom these ends and the sensuous revolt have small attraction. By means of a happy heredity, family life and education, these people have risen above an infantile stage to an adult-hood where they perceive the beautiful and enduring satisfactions having little to do with "the flesh pots of Egypt." They have struggled up to a plane of living where beauty in its many forms - in nature, art and music - makes powerful appeal, where the building of a better society is one of the most dynamic motives of life; where, above all, love appears as potentially a mighty creative and ennobling force - the mightiest in human experience. In a considerable degree this group have discovered the ultimate meaning of life - self direction towards satisfying ideal ends.

The solution which the critics of monogamy give to this coercive evil of monogamous union, i. e., a looser union, divorce by mutual consent or a natural union, could hardly have the same constructive effect upon society as monogamy. Were this release from all external support and authority for the mass of mankind to be carried out, it can hardly be doubted that large numbers of oversexed, spiritually under developed people would give free rein to physical passion and enter upon a period, more or less prolonged, of cheap sexual adventures. The removal of all the restraints of religion, law and public opinion would, the writer believes, encourage that large group of persons in every society who

are sensitive to social judgments and lean heavily upon the supports furnished by church and law, to throw off weak inner restraints and avail themselves of freedom in sex relations before they are normally ready for it. The advocates of love's freedom maintain that this condition would be preferable to the present situation, where lip service only is rendered to monogamy, while secret amours may be found on every hand.

To this the writer would reply that it is not in reality morally preferable. At present large numbers of men and women receive distinct help from more than one social source in maintaining control of that powerful sex urge which seeks to dominate human nature, subordinating all other impulses to its will and not infrequently devastating personality. In the present stage of moral development, it is quite possible that under a regime of freedom millions would try one thrilling sex experience after another, only to find in the end complete disillusionment and a kind of moral nausea with regard to love and sex. "For true love, apparently, is not satisfied with mere mating, and the deepest spiritual needs of humanity are frustrated when one powerful impulse of nature leaps into the saddle and rides mankind." The profound disillusionment which Floyd Dell relates from "Love and Greenwich Village" referred to heretofore makes us pause before we agree to remove such external supports as now exist to buttress inner control.

Monogamy may be a mouse trap for those who go after the bait, but it is also true that the kite which flies the longest and soars the highest is the one whose string has an anchorage. So soon as the string

breaks or the anchorage slips, the kite will fall.

There are other considerations adverse to a reign of sex freedom through looser forms of marriage. In its more lasting form, love reaches beyond the act of mating and seeks a common life and destiny with the beloved; it craves the refuge of a home that endures, amid kaleidoscopic social changes and the happiness of offspring. Probably a fairly trustworthy criterion by which to distinguish true love from passing sex spell would be the degree in which lovers desired mutuality of life - common hopes, plans, joys and responsibilities, including those that children inevitably bring. Generally speaking, true lovers seem to take "the long view" of their relationship - they look forward to life together through the years and accept the limitations upon absolute freedom that it imposes. For it cannot be denied that when two individuals are impelled by love to enter into the most intimate relationship of life, which they plan to make an enduring one, they must resign to some extent, determined by the exigencies of the situation, their untrammeled freedom as separate individuals. The mutual relationship demands some concessions to the well-being and happiness of the other partner, some degree of subordination of the self to the needs of helpless children.

The psychology of the man and woman who enter into the less binding union, with its quality of temporariness is almost antithetical to that of the partners who look forward to a common life, to the making of a home in accord with their heart's desire, to the rearing of offspring. Under a regime of sex freedom, each mate, whether consciously

or not, harbors in his mind the idea that if the relationship is not immediately and consciously satisfactory, it can easily be terminated. Most women and some men expect that the romantic glamor of courtship can and should persist throughout the period of their union; that the ardor of the first passion can endure. If they are disappointed in these hopes - and women nourish them far more than realistic men - if the lover grows less thrillingly interesting, as he or she comes to be better known; if misunderstandings occasionally occur, the natural tendency is promptly to regard the relationship as a mistake, the choice of a mate a misguided one. Then, if the disillusionment is mutual, and it is most liable to be, for such is contagious, each may seek another and more fortunate experience; or if only one partner is discontented, the other is left desolate. In the case of life-long marriage, the psychology is quite different. The initial love may be no stronger, but in this case it is reinforced by the desire for a permanent life together which leads to the will to make the union an enduring success. Each partner, knowing that he has taken the other with the hope that their relationship may be life-long, seeks to make allowances for the other, to concede and adapt to this human being so intimately linked to oneself. Misunderstandings and bickerings will occur, but they will be understood as the perhaps unavoidable accompaniments of the delicate business of adaptation of one complex personality to another. Again, "the long view" will be taken and this will aid love in making the necessary adjustments. If the partners win through the first difficult years of married life, they will find in the end that they have exchanged romantic glamor and flaming passion for a deep, abiding love, calmer, but none the less joy-giving, and for a comrade-

ship based on mutual understanding that will grow dearer and more satisfying with the passage of the years. This happy relationship which many married couples know, is not a free gift to the shallow and impatient lover; it is a hard won prize of those mates who set before themselves an ideal of married life that transcends passion, and leads them to seek harmony of interests and purposes. Those who have once achieved this relationship of comrades, who are at the same time true and tranquil lovers, no doubt would, if they could, testify that it is the most profoundly satisfying and enriching of all human ties.

Society can build far greater enterprises on the personalities of men and women who have been forged in that kind of process than it can from those whose experiences have been more scattered and shallow.

2. Increases Boredom and Satiety.

The second criticism closely allied to the first but different enough to warrant consideration is that monogamy increases boredom and satiety. Edward Carpenter writes with impressive conviction on this point. He describes the "weary couples that may be seen at seaside places and pleasure resorts - their blank faces, utter want of any topic of conversation which has not been exhausted a thousand times already, and their obvious relief when the hour comes which will take them back to their several and divided occupations." This is more of an indictment of the individuals who marry than it is of monogamy. These same individuals would be flat and commonplace sooner or later

in any situation. When we marry we are no more perfect than when we do not marry. Unless a person grows he or she needs to be surrounded with safeguards which will protect society from his or her disintegrating and decaying personality.

When you see how many men and women succeed and fail in all of the other situations involving relationships in human life, there is every reason why in the most supreme venture, requiring the functioning of the whole personality, that a considerable portion should fail. The relationship in each case is bound to be just about what the individuals who compose it are themselves - moral success or moral failure, or a mingling of both. As the good old maxim puts it, "You can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear." So you can't make a successful marriage out of unsuccessful people, nor a superior marriage out of men and women who are themselves inferior. A failure on the part of only one of the parties concerned is usually enough to bring disaster. So why expect too much? Further, why condemn monogamy for ills which, given the same individuals, do obtain under other forms of union?

The philosophy of some people is to exploit life. When two such individuals come together there is bound to be failure. When one such individual comes into relationship with another, the other person suffers. The exploiter in a monogamous union loses. He cannot be self-centered and selfish without suffering for it. Neither can the woman. No form of marriage checks an individual and appraises his or her worth to society as quickly as monogamy. If individuals are found lacking, society must look to changing and improving them. When it does, such criticism of monogamy as this will not arise.

3. Denies the Joy of Parenthood to Many Women.

This criticism is valid and a difficult one to answer. The statement that monogamy denies the right to love and parenthood to hundreds of thousands of warmhearted young women who have been unfortunate to fall in love with men already married, can be answered.

Why those who criticize monogamy should allow individuals freedom in the number of other individuals with whom they can have loving fellowship, and then insist that fellowship be confined to one because that one happened to be tied in a monogamous union, is rather paradoxical. In other words, if we had greater freedom through divorce by mutual consent, trial marriage or polygyny, then an individual, A, would be equal to having intercourse with several persons; but because we have monogamy and one of the several persons is denied that individual, A, then it takes the real joy out of life for A, and A cannot think of marrying any of the others possible under the free situation. We can hardly condemn our monogamy for that.

There is a condition, however, created by the wars which have ravaged Europe, whereby monogamy is placed in the position of condemning thousands of young women, longing for love, eager for children, to everlasting celibacy and childlessness. Grete Meisel Hess declares that in Germany in 1916 there was an excess of one million women over men. Moreover, she estimates that not more than sixty per cent of German men marry. In 1900 the German census showed that seventy-eight per cent of women eighteen to twenty-five years of age were unmarried, and sixty per cent of the women of twenty-five to forty years were single.

England is another country which because of its wars and colonizing policy has greatly disturbed the biological ratio. Canada, especially Nova Scotia, and all of New England, has seen the ratio changed by the industrial shift of the men from the farms, hamlets, villages and small towns to the cities.

In view of these facts, which enforce celibacy upon millions of young women fit for procreation, Grete Meisel Hess declares that those who would reform our modes of sexual life "aim at complete freedom for all those forms of the erotic life which promote racial progress; freedom, above all, for the work of reproduction in so far as this is the outcome of unrestricted natural selection."

The largest contribution to this situation is made by war, and since war is the greatest social sin of mankind, it is unfair to blame the institution of monogamy for crimes and conditions caused by this destructive agency. We have another condition caused by the war in the scattering over Europe of 8,000,000 orphans. We agree that it would be better for thousands of them had they never been born, but because of the misery and suffering of these children should we say that parents of Europe should not have children any longer? The love of the parents who brought these children into the world is not responsible for their present misery, but war is. Monogamy is not responsible for breaking the biological ratio between man and woman, but war is. Therefore, why not condemn the institution responsible for the condition?

The difficulty caused by men moving to the cities is being met, because women are now shifting as much as the men, and this breaking of the ratio due to natural causes of progress and growth will be more easily met in the future due to the new and essential freedom of woman.

CONCLUSION

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The question for society to ask itself is this, can it afford to risk racial decay and degeneracy by tolerating an unnatural promiscuity? This is racially infinitely worse than polygyny. "Under the polygynous system the primitive races did limit relationships to the family group. China adopts the concubinage system - except in the trading centers where the West has corrupted Eastern customs - but the position of the women is that of cattle, and the infant mortality is almost unbelievable. In Europe and America women have acquired their intellectual independence and are fast acquiring economic and political independence, so it is useless to talk of reverting to legal concubinage. We see from anthropological and biological evidence that the normal channel through which we may hope to attain better inherent quality in the human race is through monogamy. The economic conditions that fostered polygyny no longer obtain under present day industrial conditions, and if adequate maintenance and education for the rising generation are to be secured, the family unit must have the social and economic stability that only monogamy can give.

Biology and ethics are at one in insisting on the ideal. The problem for us is how to realize the ideal, and at the same time give due freedom to the individual. This includes the woman as well as the man."¹

The present generation is not to be condemned. It may be badly taught and ignorant, but it has courage and is prepared to face facts. Not so long ago women were set aside in every town - the slaves of vice, outcasts of society, well-to-do women were lulled to acquiesce in the

¹ Neville - Rolfe, op. cit. pp 91-92

fiction that man is naturally polygynous, therefore, unless his polygynous tendencies are provided for, no married woman or respectable girl would be unmolested.

The extra-marital relationship to satisfy polygynous man is now moving from the brothel and restricted sections of society to the finest hotels and apartments and carried on with women of the upper classes. How to deal with polygynous man, therefore, is one of the stubborn problems facing monogamy.

Intelligent, educated women are facing this bogey of polygynous man and monogamous woman in the face. They refuse to purchase "security" at the price of their sisters' degradation. We know it is biological moonshine to have two halves of one race inherently different. If man is more polygynous than woman it has been bred into him and can in turn be bred out of him. We have men and women of all types in the world. We have in our own hands the power of selection. In Europe and America for generations there has been no value in biological selection attached to continence, except in women. In the past there has been a selective value placed on courage - on honesty - on physical fitness - on comeliness. Of recent years inebriety has certainly had a negative value, and drunkards have tended to be rejected as partners in marriage. All teaching has emphasized the social injury resulting from alcoholism and, apart from American legal enactments, the whole of Europe has become more sober during the last hundred years.

"The path towards a solution of the problems arising out of the relations of the sexes lies in the understanding of their causes and in mutual cooperation. Whether in the social aspect of the relation

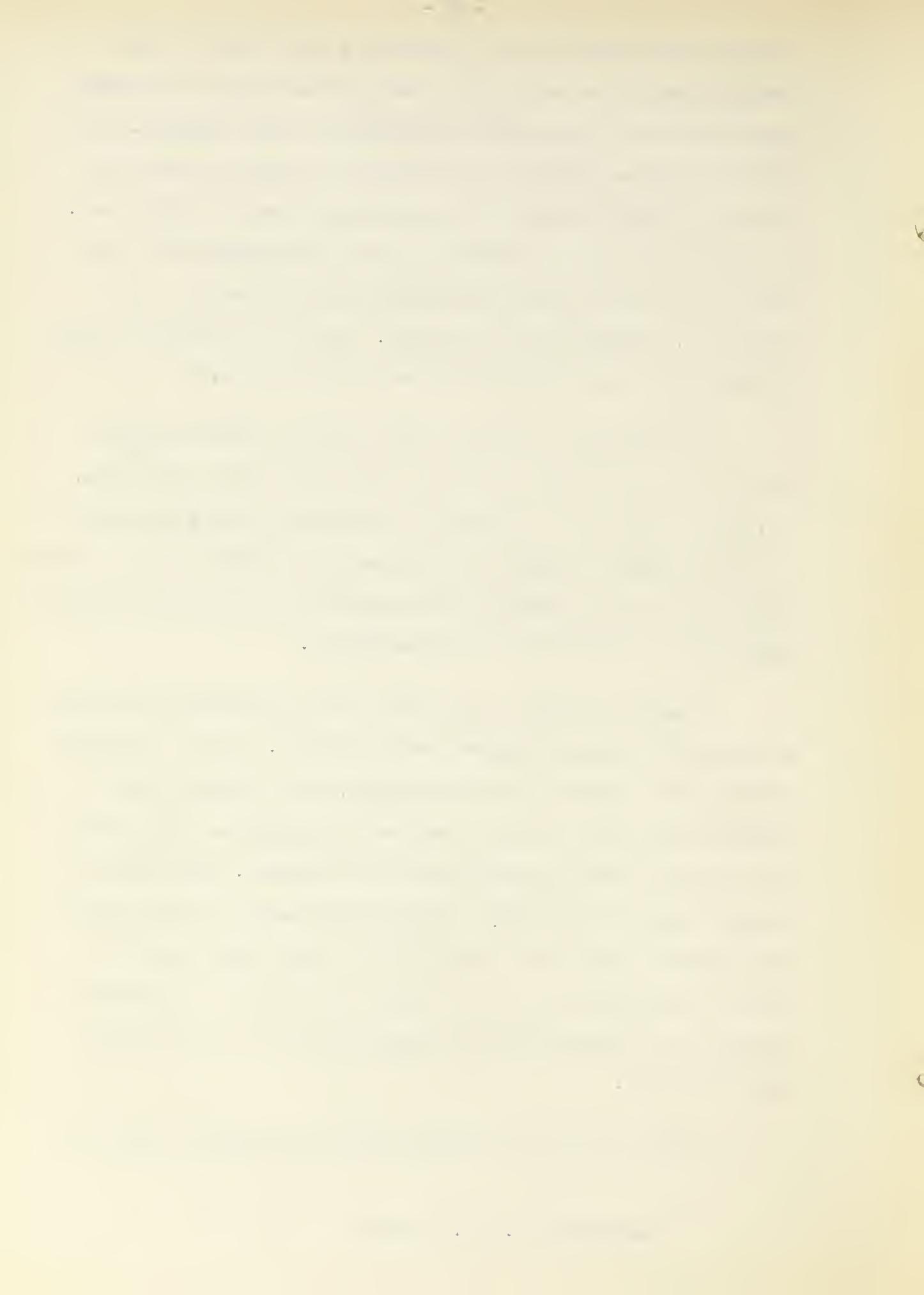
between the two sex-classes that constitute human society or in the personal aspect of the association between man and woman, no advantage can accrue to either sex from the accentuation of sex antagonism, from the self defensive attitude of individualistic interests or from the endeavor to impose the aims of its own instincts upon the opposite sex. All such association is a compromise, as all the sentiments that have gone to establishing it have been compromises and surrenders of individualism. Maternal love is sacrifice. Love is the expression of that subordination of individualism which has created society."¹

If we want true monogamy we must attach a selective value to control and provide social conditions under which it can be practised. So long as we shrug our shoulders at the young man, "sowing his wild oats" so long as women assess each other's social value on the amount of physical attraction that can be exerted on the opposite sex, so long shall we favor conditions of promiscuity and social degeneracy.

Many have grown up in the belief that monogamy was only adopted as the result of the teaching of revealed religion. If the supernatural origins of the commands is not acknowledged, it is considered that liberty can be justly claimed to seek self expression and self realization along the lines that seem individually desirable. What has to be realized both by men and women, but especially women, is that although there may have been no Eve to eat the apple, human beings have the power of reasoning and are able to see a little way into the mysteries of Nature, and that knowledge and independence carry with them great responsibilities.

Those who did not know mental defect was hereditary could not

¹ Briffault, op. cit. p 519-520

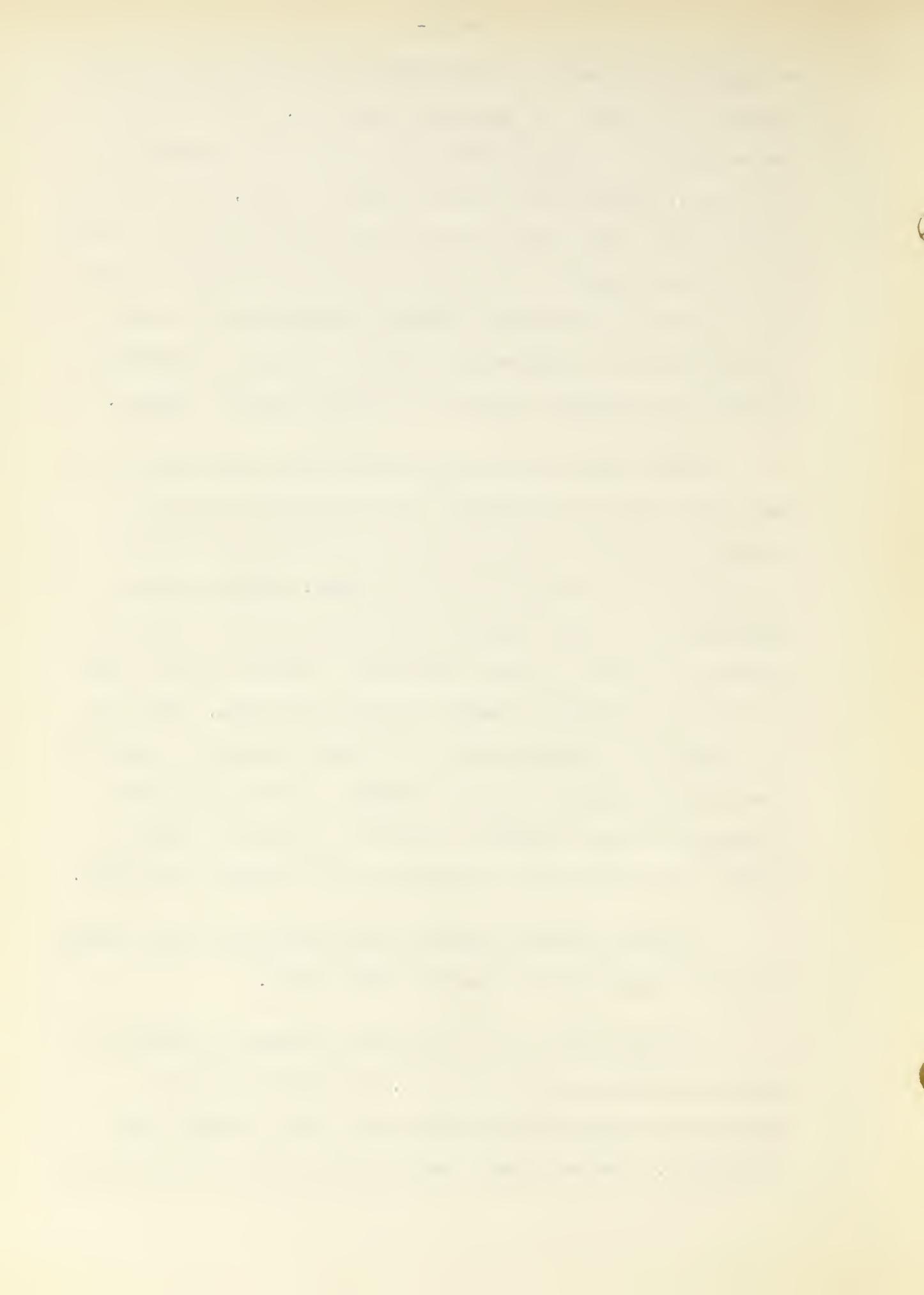


be blamed for encouraging a feeble-minded girl to marry, but to do so knowingly is to commit a crime against the future. In the same way when no positive teaching is given to the young on the importance of sex control, when the public tolerate suggestive plays, books and advertisements, they cannot blame the present generation for its lax morality, but once it is understood that racial improvement is dependent on sex-control, value will be given in selection for marriage to the self-controlled, and the rising generation will be trained to sublimate or transform their creative energies into socially desirable channels.

Another factor bearing upon this problem which may tend to reduce extra-marital relationships is that the modern wife with a knowledge of sex will compete with the "love maiden" the "liaison" or "companion" for the attention of her husband. With the modern improvements in the home tending to reduce the household duties to a minimum and make them a pleasure rather than a drudgery she will have greater leisure in which to improve her mind and talents. With love on her side at the beginning plus a more subtle knowledge of physiology, a keener understanding of sex-consciousness, and a more brilliant utilization of erotic technique she will be to the man all that he desires, and in turn he will contribute to the enrichment of her life.

Parenthood in this situation will be voluntary and the children entering this union will form another binding force.

However, we see in life that we are continually subjected to checks and balances in making progress. The hopeful state just described which while probable in the future will be fraught with difficulties. These will make a severe strain upon the ideal monogamous



state we desire to establish.

The first difficulty it faces is "the heightening of the sex-passion in both men and women with the increase of luxury and artificialism."¹ "The nervous and sexual systems of women today, ruined among the rich by a life and occupations which stimulate the emotional sensibilities without ever giving the strength and hardiness which flow from healthy and regular industry and often ruined among the poor by excessive labor carried on under most unhealthy conditions, make real wifehood and motherhood things almost unknown. 'Injudicious training' says Bebel, 'miserable social conditions (food, dwelling, occupation) produce weak, bloodless, nervous beings, incapable of fulfilling the duties of matrimony.' "²

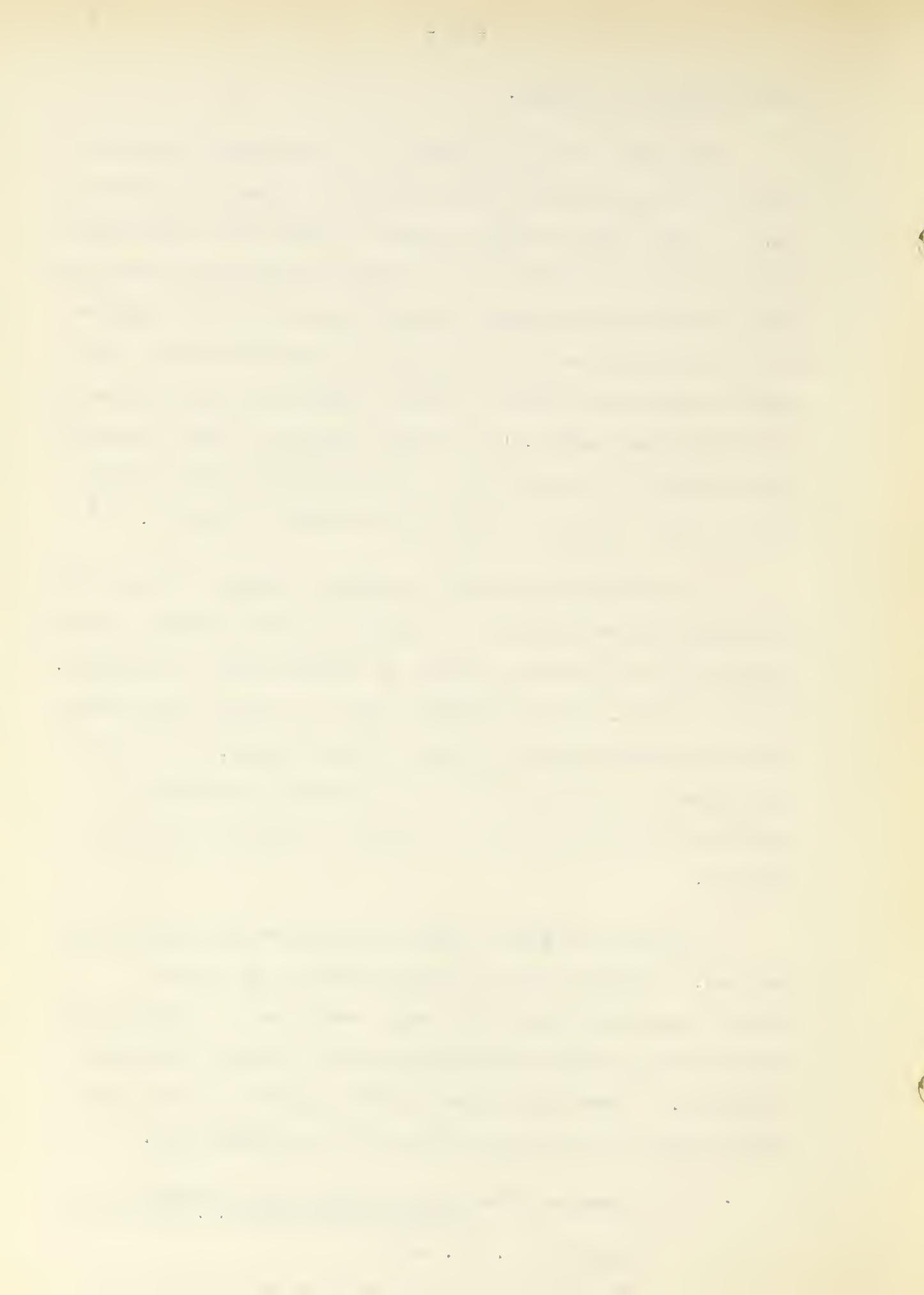
In consequence the matter of control is made more difficult and society must give attention to this problem (which it is doing in numerous instances) by providing more adequate and wholesome means of recreation. This will involve a life very different from the present one, far more in the open air, with real bodily exercise and development, some amount of regular work, a knowledge of the laws of health and physiology, an altogether wider mental outlook, and greater self-reliance and nature-hardihood.

The divorce, mentioned above, is another menace which monogamy must meet. John Haynes Holmes believes it will be met and I am inclined toward his feeling on the matter when he writes, "Divorce will more and more be recognized and accepted as the inevitable complement of marriage."³ Even today divorce is still regarded as an evil, and divorced persons more or less suffer under the reproach of sin.

¹ Carpenter Edward, Love's Coming of Age published by Mitchell Kennerley N.Y. 1911 pp 190

² Carpenter op. cit. pp 61

³ Holmes John Haynes "Has Marriage Any Future?" pp 19



All this must disappear as men come to recognize that mistakes in marriage, this most intimate relationship of life, are only more liable than they are in other less difficult relationships, and must be corrected by some established process of release. "In time to come, divorce will be regarded as a legal operation in the social world exactly comparable to a surgical operation in the medical world. The process will perhaps be made more difficult, certainly more dignified and reverent, than what we commonly know today, but it will be a process as freely at the disposal of those who love no longer as marriage itself is now at the disposal of those who love."¹ This may appear overly sanguine and fanciful, but so were the statements of every great leader in approaching the solution of social problems which have been solved in the past.

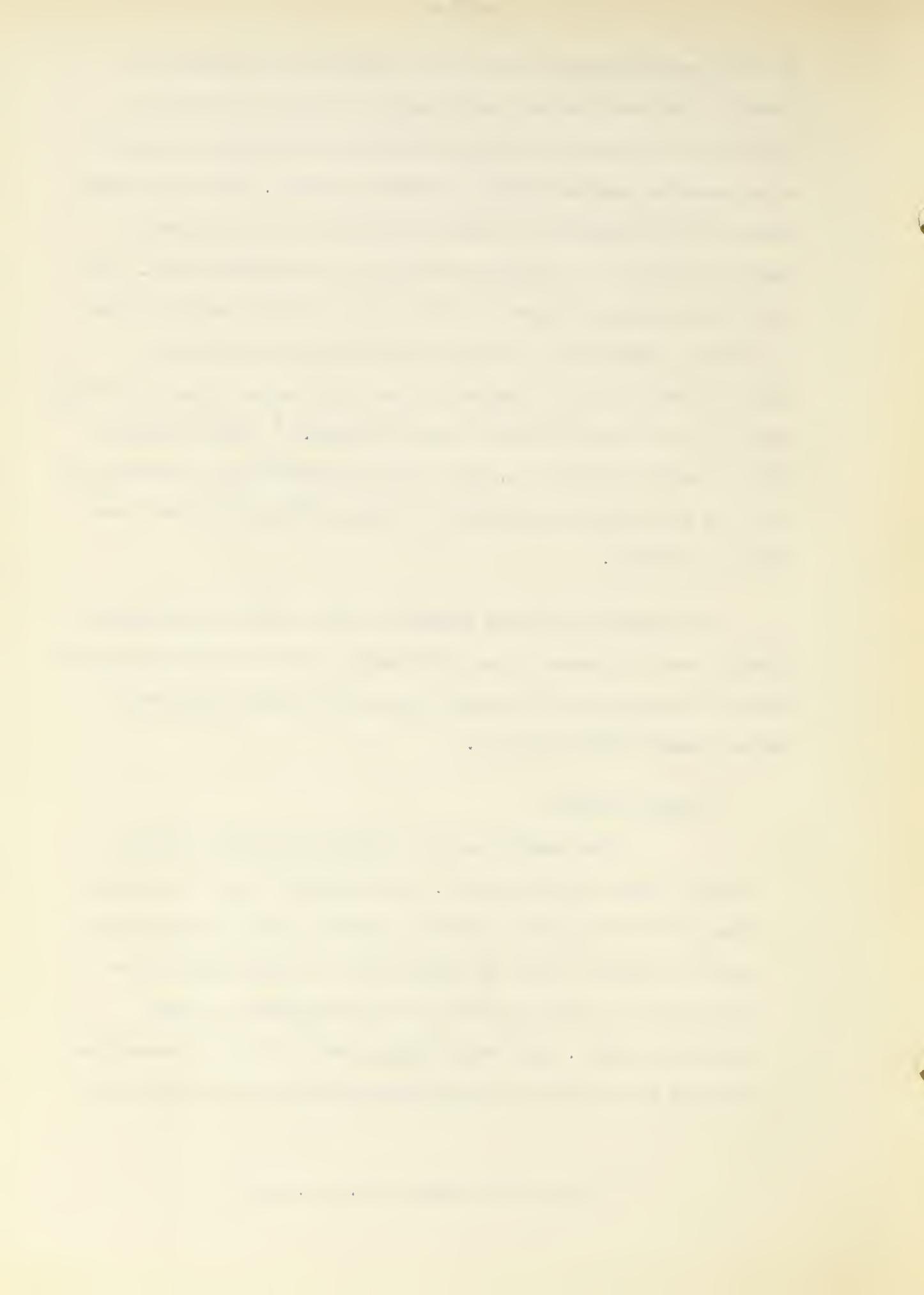
The prevalence of and persistent drift toward the monogamous standard, and its clearer enunciation among the most advanced peoples of the world suggest that its marital form is in closest accord with rational human nature and needs.

Ellwood writes:

"Our present society vacillates between moral and immoral forms of birth control. It would seem that the socialization of the family would involve a sense of social responsibility for the children within the family group. It should give rise ultimately to a moral control over the reproductive process within the family. Such moral control would of course necessitate not only a high degree of intelligence on the part of individuals

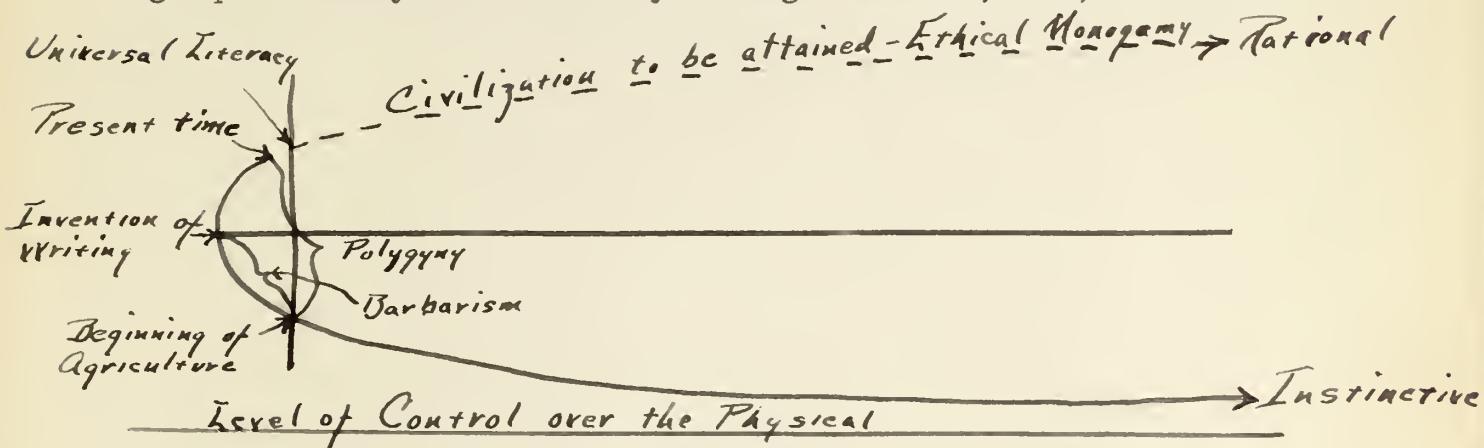
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Holmes John Haynes Op. Cit. pp 19



in the marriage relation, but also a high sense of social responsibility. In such a highly socialized family group, children would be welcomed in so far as they could be properly provided for physically and spiritually. Child care would again be recognized as the primary function of the family group. The family would itself become even more than it has been in the past the primary socializing and cultural agency." ¹

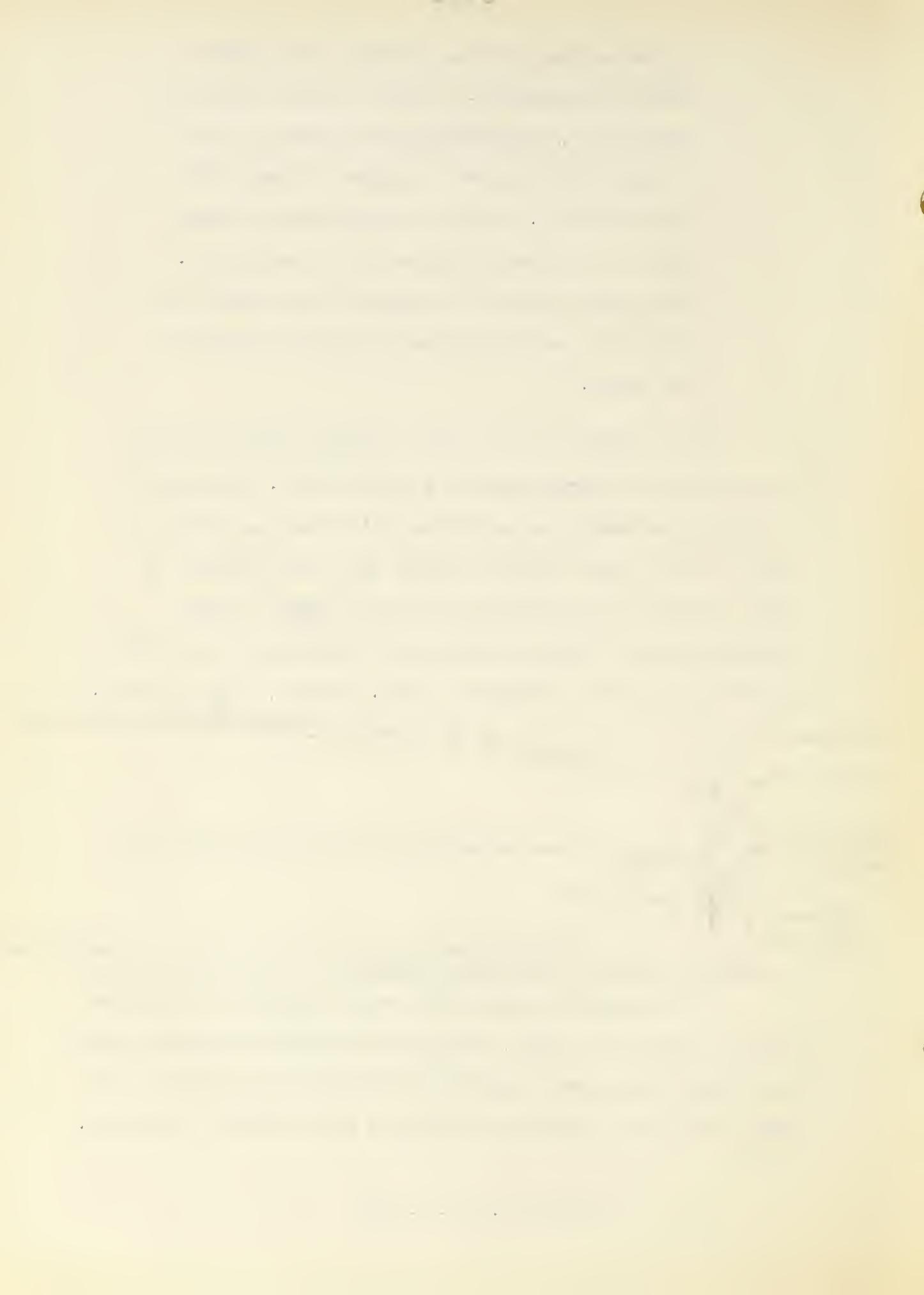
"The primitive family began as a simple pairing monogamy upon the basis of natural instincts and necessities. In spite of the aberrations through which the family life has gone during its history, we have every reason to believe that if the progress of culture continues, the ultimate family will be again a stable monogamy, but upon a basis of the ethical obligations of the family group to society and to humanity at large. We have, then, the curve:-



"The highly developed family, which recognizes its responsibility to society as a whole, depends for its diffusion upon the social intelligence and general socialization of the masses of people. The family life of the past had very little of such a cultural foundation.

¹

Ellwood op. cit. p. 204



Primitively, it rested upon instincts and the necessities of life; later it was upheld by a system of authority in law, government and religion. But the ethical family cannot be narrowly based. It must be based upon the welfare of society as a whole, upon a sense of the social obligation, upon social ideals which are willingly shared and accepted. All this, however, presupposes a high development of spiritual culture among the masses, the general diffusion of social intelligence and social goodwill. When this state is attained, the diffusion of the pattern of ethical monogamy will be possible and ideal." ¹

¹ Ellwood op. cit. p 205

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